

EPICTETVS  
HIS  
MORALS,  
WITH  
SIMPLICIUS  
HIS  
COMMENT.

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*Made English from the Greek,*  
BY  
GEORGE STANHOPE, D.D.

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The Second Edition Corrected, with the  
Addition of the *LIFE* of *Epictetus* from  
the *French* of Monsieur Boileau.

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L O N D O N:  
Printed for RICHARD SARE, at  
*Gray's-Inn-Gate* in *Holborn*. MDCC.





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To the Worthily Honoured,

WILLIAM GORE,  
of Tewing, in the County of  
Hertford, Esquire.

S I R,

**T**O omit the many trifling Pretences commonly made use of upon these Occasions, I shall think this Dedication abundantly justified, by only alledging one thing in its Excuse, That every Man is by no means duly prepared to Read, or Relish; much less is every Man of Quality, a proper Patron for, *Epictetus*.

So Exquisite a Piece of Morality requires, not only a Good Understanding, but a Virtuous and Well-Disposed Mind, a Se-

*The Epistle Dedicatory:*

rious Sense of the Dignity of a Reasoning Soul, and a due Care to keep up its Character ; Affections raised above the Sordid Enjoyments of the World, and a fix'd Opinion, that the Trouble, we are at about these things, ought not to be esteem'd the Business, but the Great Misfortune and Incumbrance of Humane Life ; a steady Government of the Passions, and a Temper Even and Easie, Affable and Obliging. Without these Qualifications, or some good Advances towards them, a Man's Palate can never stand to the following Reflections ; and the most excellent Rules of Living would be entertain'd with coldness and contempt.

Whether

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Whether I have done this Author Reason in the following Translation, is neither possible nor proper for me to determine : But though that performance were allowed to be never so perfect, it is yet a very necessary Advantage, and indeed a Right due both to him and myself, to take Sanctuary in the Goodness of a Person who knows the better how to Pardon, because he knows how to Judge; and whose Virtues have already not only approved, but transcribed, and by the best, the Christian Morality, have even Corrected and Refined upon all the most valuable Parts of this Book.

How far this is your case, I will not, I need not take upon

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

me to determine ; all, Sir, that have the Happiness to know you, will do it for me : Permit me only to close this Address, with my most sincere Wishes, that you may long continue an Ornament to Learning, Religion, and your own Family ; a publick Blessing to your Country and your Friends ; and that I may have the honour of being ever acknowledg'd in that Number. One Testimony whereof, will be the accepting these Professions which I am now desirous to make to the World, of my being with all possible Respect,

S I R,

Lewisham, Feb.  
1st. 1694.

*Your most Obliged,*

*and most Humble Servant,*

GEORGE STANHOPE.

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**I** Do not give the Reader this Trouble, out of any Intent to make an *Apology* for shewing the following Book in English; for sure the rendring such admirable Instructions as diffusive as it is possible, cannot need an *Excuse*. Nor do I intend to give him a tedious Account of the Performance it self; but shall only say, that it hath been my Endeavour to express the Author's Sense with all the Easiness and Freedom I could, so as to decline both the Slavery of a Literal, and the Licentiousness of a Loose and Luxuriant Interpretation.

My Design at present, is only to make some necessary Reflections upon those Parts of the Stoical Philosophy, which are apt to prejudice Men against it, and tempt some Persons, from these extravagant Systems of

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*Moral Perfections, to think, (at least to plead in Vindication of their own Excesses) that the Generality of Rules prescribed for the Reforming our Manners, are Things too nicely thought, sublime, airy, and impracticable Speculations.*

*It is not my Purpose, nor ought it to be any Man's, to vindicate these, or any other Masters of Heathen Morality, in every particular Notion they advanced. But I must beg Leave to put my Reader in mind, what is the proper Advantage to be made of these Errors; and that sure is not to run down Morality as an empty Name, (which the Stoicks must be allowed, in despite of all the Aggravations their Failings are capable of, to have done excellent Service to,) but to discern in this the Wisdom of Almighty God, who in the midst of his most liberal Endowments, never suffered the greatest Heathens to be without some notable Defect of Judgment, but ever debased their Knowledge with an Alloy of Ignorance and Folly; And that, no doubt, to create in us a more just Esteem and Veneration for his own Christian Philosophy, to which alone*  
this

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*this Perfection was reserved, of Truth without Error, and Light without Darkness.*

*I think it therefore my Duty, so far to comply with the Objector in condemning these Schemes of Ethicks, as to shew upon this Occasion, That the Principles of Religion have exalted our Virtues, and adjusted the measures of them, infinitely better, than any Humane Institutions were ever able to do. For, though the Stoicks are most deservedly admired for their Noble Notions in these Matters above any other Sect, and the brave Attempts they made towards the reducing Nature to its Primitive Purity and Perfection; yet, I think it cannot fairly be denied, that in their Way of Treating the Passions and Powers of the Soul, they much overshot the Mark, and have quite mistaken the Case. How far it is possible to go, in subduing the Passions absolutely, I shall not now Dispute; but take it for granted, that the generality of People might do a great deal more in it, than they either do, or imagine they can do:*  
*And*



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And that Sloth, which is the prevailing Vice, and the most fatal Obstruction to a good and happy Life, affrights us with many Difficulties and Discouragements, by no means of Nature's, but entirely of our own making. Yet to deliver our selves from those inward Commotions, which are visible Occasions of so much Mischief, we must not presently pass a rash and rigorous Sentence of utter Excision upon them, but try some gentler and more prudent Method, because the same things are equally capable of producing a great deal of good.

These are indeed the secret Springs that move and actuate us; and all the Care incumbent upon the Governing Part of the Mind, is to set them right, and at a true Pitch, that so every Motion which flows from thence, may be Just and Regular. They are like the Acid in our Stomachs, that constantly provokes and renews our Appetites, and prevents the most necessary Functions of Life, from becoming flat and nauseous to us. And accordingly, He, who contrived, and consequently must be

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be best acquainted with our Frame, found them necessary to inspire and invigorate this heavy Mass; He saw, that thus to ease us of all our Pains, would be to rob us, at the same time, of all our Pleasures; and for this Reason he hath made Promises and Threatnings, Rewards and Punishments, the Gayeties and Anxieties of Heart, (all which are but so many different ways of working upon our Passions,) the most proper and powerful Inducements to the best Religion in the World. So that in truth, the main, I might say the whole of our Duty and Happiness, consists, not in stifling these Affections, and condemning them to a State of utter Inactivity, but in moderating and regulating them: And no Degree of Love, or Hatred, or Desire, or Fear, or Anger, or Grief, or any other simple Passion, can be too intense, when placed upon worthy Objects, and directed to worthy Ends.

The same Difficulty lies against Stoicism, with regard to Civil Society, and the mutual Concern we feel for one another. For some Rules given here, if literally

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rally and strictly followed, may seem to threaten the Destruction of all Natural Affection and Charity among Men; which therefore Christianity hath taken into its peculiar Care and Protection. It represents Temporal Afflictions as Chastisements, and expects we should feel the Smart, in Order to be amended by the Rod. It remits us for Comfort to higher and better Considerations, and does not amuse us with vain Notions, that these Things neither touch nor ought to affect us; but tells us, That the more sensibly they do so, the more glorious the Improvement and the Reward is capable of being made. It inspires Compassion and good Nature, and the tenderest Resentments of other People's Misfortunes. It commands no Man to attend the Funeral Obsequies of his Friend or Dearest Relation, with a gay or perfectly composed Countenance, as knowing very well, that this Behaviour is Barbarous and Brutish; and that what some have called Philosophy and Constancy in such Cases, may seem rather the Effect of Stupidity, or Sullenness, or Pride; that this

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is an imaginary Perfection, which Few ever did, and None ought to attain to: And, in a word, that the Excess and Inordinacy of our Passions is the only Thing blameable in them. Against which therefore it makes ample Provision; such as offers no Violence to the Original Softnesses of Humane Nature, but preserves all those Respects entire, which we owe to our selves and to one another; such as may be used with a very good Grace, and such as will be most effectual, when rightly applied.

This Censure is no more, than what appeared to me highly seasonable and expedient, to convince the most partial Admirers of Heathen Philosophy, that wherein soever those Systems of Morality differ from the Christian, they are manifestly inferior to them. In other Points we can scarce give them greater Commendation than they really deserve: And among them all, I know none that challenges more Esteem than this Book. The Instructions are so wise, the Allusions so lively, the Exhortations so moving, and the Arguments  
so

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so strong, that they may well be allowed, not only to convince our Reason, but to excite our greatest Admiration. The Application is so easie, by a little Change, of Philosophy into Religion, and the Plurality of Divine Beings into the one only True God, that any considering Christian may here find a Scheme of what Himself ought to be. And, except some particular Subtleties in the First, Thirteenth, Thirty Fourth, and Thirty Eighth Chapters, (which I mention here particularly, that the more unlearned Readers may, if they please, pass them over, without suffering themselves to be prejudiced against the rest of the Book) the Arguments are so plain and substantial, as to recommend themselves to the Sense, and to Sute the Capacity, of every Common Man. But it must be remembred again, what is the proper Benefit of such Writings, and that, no doubt, must be, to let us see what a Reproach the Perfection of these Ancients is to us at this Day. And I heartily wish, that the present Treatise may have its due Influence upon every One who shall

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shall peruse it ; by provoking Men to a holy Emulation and generous Disdain, that Epictetus his Proficient should out-do any Professor of the Gospel, who walks by a clearer Light, and excels in every Advantage of Goodness, except such as he wilfully denies to himself, those of Consideration, and Resolution, and an active Zeal.

G. S.

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ERRATA

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ERRATA in the Life of Epictetus.

PAG. iii. line 26. read it is. P. xix. l. 32. for They r. He.

In the Morals and Comment.

P. 15. l. 22. after familiarly r. with. P. 19. l. 4. r. and make. l. 11. r. find in. P. 29. l. 22. r. its Being from. P. 38. l. 7. f. are r. is. l. 8. r. stands. l. 9. r. depend. P. 7. l. 25. r. every one. l. ult. f. attend r. attempt. P. 118. l. 5. r. most absurd. P. 129. l. 1. r. of Things. P. 135. l. 18. f. We r. He. P. 156. l. 7. f. compass r. compose. P. 167. l. 11. f. it. r. this. P. 189. l. 8. dele the. l. 22. r. that others. P. 237. l. 1. dele Chap. XXXV. The Chapters are misnumbred to p. 309. P. 273. l. 13. f. his r. our. P. 285. l. 22. r. in its Essence. P. 305. l. 15. r. confidence, if. P. 345. l. 16. r. hath gotten within you. P. 368. l. 22. dele not. l. 25. it is not not Night. P. 384. l. 9. for Weather r. Weapon. P. 386. f. Ravage r. Rage. P. 401. after warned r. us of. P. 406. l. 15. f. Mortal r. Moral.

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T H E

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THE  
LIFE  
OF  
EPICTETUS,

From the *French* Collections of  
Mr. G. Boileau.

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INTRODUCTION.

**W**HILE my Thoughts were employed about making good the Promise which my Reader will find in the first Page of this Edition, it was my Fortune to light upon the following Account of Epictetus in French. Which, by comparing with the Original Authors, from whom the several Passages are taken, I observed to be collected with such Fidelity, as might reasonably excuse any farther Pains of mine, than that of Translating it into our own Tongue. I have therefore only added a marginal Note or two, and given the Narration as I found it. The greatest part will approve it self Authentick, because gathered from those very Discourses of this Philosopher, which Arrian hath preserved for us; and with regard to them, the

(a)

References



*The Life of Epictetus.*

*References here are much more exact, than in Mr. Boileau, or any other Author I have met with upon this Subject.*

*Suid. in  
Epictet.  
A. Gell.  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 18.*

THE time of *Epictetus* his Birth seems to have been near the End of *Nero's* Reign, the Place of it *Hierapolis*, a City in *Phrygia*. The other Circumstances relating to it, are uncertain: For we have no farther Knowledge of either his Father or Mother, but that they were both, without question, of very mean Condition. *A. Gellius*, and *Suidas* tell us, that he was Slave to *Epaphroditus*, a Freeman of *Nero's*, and a Captain of his Guards, and in short, a Man, of whom Story hath delivered down nothing valuable, or worthy of Remark, but only his being Master to so renowned a Slave. Among some others of this Man's Actions, *Arrian* hath taken occasion to mention Two, which, I think, ought not to be omitted here, because they are exactly agreeable to his Temper, and seem to give us a very expressive Idea of the Person.

*Arrian.  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 19.*

This Man had sold one of his Slaves, who was a Shoemaker, to an Officer of *Nero's*, because he found him a Bungler at his Trade; But the same *Felicio* (for so the Slave was called) coming afterwards to make the Emperor's Shoes, *Epaphroditus* upon the News of this Preferment, was particularly civil, and most surprisingly respectful to him; consulted him in Business, applauded his Parts, and made this Good-for-nothing Fellow his principal Confident and intimate Friend.

Another

## The Life of Epictetus.

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Another time, there came a Man to him, and in great Passion threw himself at his Feet, complaining most heavily of his hard Fortune, and what Distress he was reduced to, declaring that now out of all his Estate, he had not above a hundred and fifty thousand Crowns left; to which *Epaphroditus* replied, not by way of Railery, as any other Man would have done upon so extravagant a Complaint, but with great seriousness, and an appearance of Concern, that he was really astonished at his Patience, in forbearing so long to make his case known.

Under the Dominion of this coxcomby Master it was, that *Epictetus* passed the first part of his Life. At what time, or by what means he obtained his Liberty, we have no positive Account: But thus much we are assured of, that upon an Edict of *Domitian* for banishing all Philosophers from *Rome* and *Italy*, he withdrew to *Nicopolis*, a City of *Epirus*, called by the Moderns *Prevesa*. And his being included under that Prohibition, in the Quality of a Philosopher, is a manifest Proof, that he was a Freeman. For indeed, is it not to be imagined, that a Person, whose Merit had recommended him to the particular Favour and Esteem of the Emperours of his time, should be suffered to continue in slavery. It hath been generally thought, that after this Retreat, he never returned any more to *Rome*, but passed the remainder of his Life at *Nicopolis*: And this Opinion is grounded upon *Arrian's* taking express notice in several parts of his Collections, that those Discourses, of which his Book consists, were made and delivered at *Nicopolis*. But notwithstanding this con-

*Arrian*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 16.

*A. Gell.*  
Lib. XV.  
Cap. 11.  
*Euseb.*  
*Chron.*

*Not. ad*  
*Epict. &*  
*Simpl p. 4.*

*Spart. in  
Adr. Cap.  
16.*

jecture be supported by the Authority of *Salmasius*, I am apt still to suspect, that it wants Confirmation. And in this suspicion *Spartian* bears me out, who, in the Life of *Adrian*, tells us, that Emperour was very intimate with, and bore a particular Respect to *Epictetus*. Now it will by no means enter into my Head, how this regard should be so remarkable, and that familiarity so strictly kept up, if *Epictetus* his constant residence, from the time of *Domitian's* Edict, had been in a place so remote as the City of *Nicomolis*.

*Lucian in  
Demon.*

It does not certainly appear whether he were ever married; but as I have not Authority sufficient for affirming, so neither do I think there is enough for denying it. For *Arrian* in several Passages takes notice of *Epictetus* his aversion against the Epicureans, upon this Provocation particularly, that they spoke in prejudice of Marriage. But whether a married or a single Man, I take it for highly probable, that he had no Children. For, besides that no Author mentions any such, that Repartie of *Demonax* in *Lucian*, intimates that he had none. Who when *Epictetus* advised him to marry, and leave Children, replied pleasantly, *Wish all my heart, provided you give me one of your own Daughters.*

*Spart. in  
Adr. ubi  
supra.*

But how liberal soever *Spartian* hath been in the commendation of *Adrian's* generosity, and high Esteem for the Poets and Orators, and Philosophers, and Mathematicians, and the Masters of any sort of Science (though at the same time no Man living took more delight in rallying them than he) yet we have no Grounds to believe,

## *The Life of Epictetus.*

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lieve, that either that Emperor, or any of his Successors, who professed such Veneration for *Epictetus*, bestowed upon him so much, as might set him above even extreme Poverty. The reason of this probably was his obstinate contempt of Riches, which would not suffer any Favours of that kind to be fastned upon him. And this appeared by his manner of living at *Rome*, in a little Cottage, without so much as a Door to it, no Attendants but one Old Woman, no Household Stuff, but an earthen Lamp, to the Light of which we owe those beautiful, those divine Thoughts, of which *Arrian* hath preserved some noble Remains: And by all these Circumstances we may make a judgment how poor this Philosopher was.

I come now to give an account of his Opinions and his Virtues. Among which his peculiar and darling one seems to have been Modesty. This was most eminent in his own practice, as well as in his recommendation to others. Hence he used to say, that there is no need of adorning a Man's House with rich Hangings or Paintings, for the most graceful Furniture is Temperance and Modesty; These are lasting Ornaments, and will never be the worse for wearing. He was so perfectly mortified to all Ambition and Vain-glory, that if any Philosopher ever made Humility the constant Principle of all his Actions, this was certainly the Man. For as no Man of his age did so much good, so no body sure was so very industrious to conceal the good he did. This gave occasion to those Rules,  
( a 3 ) which

*Stob. Serm.*  
38.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. IV.  
Cap 8.

which we meet with in the following Manual, 'If you have so far mastered your Appetite, as to have brought your Body to coarse fare, and to be well contented with meer Necessaries, do not glory in your abstemious way of living. And if you drink nothing but Water, proclaim not your own Sobriety upon every Occasion. Or if you would inure your self to Hardship, do it for your own Benefit, not to attract the Admiration of the People. Let vain-glorious Fools make their Trials as publick as they can, but know, that all affectations of this kind are utterly unworthy the Character of a Philosopher.

Another instance how free he was from Vanity, is this, that although no Person whatsoever of his time was better qualified for becoming an Author, yet he was so insensible of any excellence that way; so perfectly untouched with an inclination predominant usually in the most exalted minds, as to leave nothing of his own composition behind him. And had not *Arrian* transmitted to Posterity the Maxims taken from his Master's Mouth, we have some reason to doubt, whether the very Name of *Epictetus* had not been lost to the World.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 19.  
Lib. III.  
Cap. 12.  
& alibi  
passim.

It was his Judgment, that a true Philosopher was obliged to distinguish himself, not so much by what he spoke, as by what he did: And this gave him occasion to say, that the greater part of them who made profession of this Science, were only Philosophers in Word, but not in Fact. One day,

day, meeting with a certain Person, who was angry at being pitied, *Epictetus* represented to him, how very unjust that anger was, since his very being out of humor upon such an occasion was an evident proof, that his case was so wretched as to call for pity.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. IV.  
Cap. 6.

Another time, upon meeting a Man of most profligate Life, and infamous Character, who yet had the confidence to set up for Learning and Philosophy, he accosted him thus. 'O senseless Creature,

*A. Gell.*  
Lib. XVII.  
Cap. 19.

'what is it thou wouldest be at? Hast thou been careful to see that thy Vessel be sweet and clean, before thou put any Liquor into it? For if that be not seasoned, whatever is poured into it, will turn sower as Vinegar, rank as Urine, or if you can think of any thing yet more offensive and corrupt than either. *A. Gellius*, who cites the passage, gives it this commendation, that nothing could be more weighty, nothing more true; meaning, that when moral Principles, or any sort of useful Knowledge, are infused into a Soul depressed, and polluted with vicious Habits, this like a foul Vessel gives them such a tincture, that they presently become good for nothing, and turn all to corruption.

But there was in *Epictetus* one Quality, so much the more valuable, because Philosophers are but seldom famous for it; which is, that he was a very great Lover of Neatness; and said himself, upon occasions, that he had much rather see one of his Scholars come to him well dressed and curled, and had more hopes of such a one's improvement, than of one whose Hair was matted

*Arrian.*  
*Dissertat.*  
Lib. IV.  
Cap. 11.

and greasy, and his Habit slovenly. He did indeed share with the most celebrated Philosophers of old in that common misfortune of an ill Person. A weakness, and lameness in his Body he suffered under, by means of a Humour that fell into his Leg. This he acknowledges very frankly in an Epigram composed upon himself, and quoted by *A. Gellius*.

*A. Gell.*  
*Lib. II.*  
*Cap. 13.*

Δύλες Ἐπίκτιτος γένεσθαι, καὶ σῶμα πνέει,  
καὶ πνέειν ἔστι, καὶ οἶόν τι δίδανταίς.

*Although by Birth a Slave, in Body lame,  
In Fortune poor, yet dear to Heaven I am.*

*Salmas.* in *Planudes* in his Anthology must needs be mistaken in attributing this Epigram to *Epict.* & *Simpl.* p. 3. *Leonidas*, because, as *Salmasius* hath rightly observed, he was a Poet of note long before *Epictetus* his time. But then *Salmasius* himself will not allow this to be composed by *Epictetus* neither, but thinks that some half-witted Pedant first made, and then inserted it into the Text of *A. Gellius*. The only Argument alledged for this Opinion, is, that this Epigram is not to be found in an antient Manuscript of *A. Gellius*. But, admitting this to be so, if the conjecture be true, we must say that the same Pedant foisted it into *Macrob.* too. For he also *L.I.C. II.* quotes it for *Epictetus* his own, in the first Book of his *Saturnalia*. I own however, there is one reason which inclines me to suspect his being the Author of it, which is the inconsistency that appears to me, for a Man of *Epictetus* his singular Modesty

Modesty and Humility to speak so advantageously of himself.

*This Argument  
Cassaubon*

*will by no means admit, but contends for a very different Sense of this Distich, and thinks it designed only to shew, that the Prosperity or Adversity Men meet with in the Affairs of the World, ought not to be esteemed a distinguishing Mark of their being more or less Favourites of Heaven.*

But whatever become of the Composer, the matter of that Distich is incontestable. It being certain that *Epictetus* was very ill used by Fortune; but how niggardly soever she was to him, Providence made him good amends, by the liberal endowments of his Mind. And it looks as if Fortune were permitted to make War upon him, on purpose to add to the Glories of his Triumph: For I will venture to affirm, that the Condition and Hardships of a Slave, as well as the Infirmities of his Body, were necessary to recommend his Virtue, and set it off in a brighter lustre to all Posterity.

The meanness of his Fortune had no influence upon the greatness of his Soul, nor could he ever be brought to a servile Flattery of Persons in the most exalted Station, but dealt with them very plainly when he saw occasion. Speaking of Princes and Tyrants, the Power they boast of over their Inferiours, and the Submissions they expect upon that account, he expresses himself to this purpose. 'These

*African.*

'Great People are much in the wrong, when they value themselves upon the deference and services paid them by those under their Jurisdiction. Do they think  
'all

*Lib. I.*

*Cap. 19.*



*Arrian.*  
*Lib. II.*  
*Cap. 6.*

all this Court is made to them for their own sakes? Nothing less. Each Man that makes it hath a regard to his particular Interest; and when such addresses cease to be for the Interest of their Subjects, the Prince quickly finds himself neglected and despised. We take care of such, as we do of Beasts of burden, as we feed and rub down our Horses, that they may be capable of doing us better Service. We adore them, as the Men of Rome sacrifice to Diseases; if the Fever have Altars, it is from the fear of being hurt by it. And in another place; 'Why all these Terroures? says he, What is it they can do to us which we should be so much afraid of? The worst their Malice can inflict upon us is Death. And must we not of necessity die some time, and some way or other? If we cannot avoid going out of the World, what mighty matter is it how we go? Nay, is not that the shortest and easiest way which Violence and Rage sends us out by? Was any Tyrant ever so cruel to his bitterest Enemy, as to be killing him six Months together? And why then is not such a Death rather to be chosen than a Hætick Fever which oftentimes is whole years before it has dispatched us.

*Arrian.*  
*Lib. IV.*  
*Cap. 1.*

Observe what freedom he takes with those who fancy themselves free, because they were nobly descended. 'You think,' says he, because you have been twice Consul, your Father was a Senator, and you are the Emperor's Favourite, that your Quality makes you more free than others

others of a meaner Birth and Fortune.  
Alas ! you are more a Slave than the despised Man, who was born so ; and his Condition is more at large than yours. He may be sometimes ill used by a barbarous Master, but you are perpetually plagued and harassed by as many Masters as you have ungoverned Passions. The difference is, that he is a Slave in Hemp and Hair-cloth, and you in Silk and Tissue. If he be wanting in his Lib. III. Duty, he undergoes the lash, but if you Cap. 26. neglect yours, you are punished according to your Quality, and because you are Noble and *Cæsar's* Favourite, you have the privilege to have your Head taken off. A worthy privilege indeed.

So little Reserve did *Epictetus* use to those above him, when it was necessary to shew them to themselves, and convince them of the vanity of those Prerogatives they were so causelessly proud of ; Whereas in truth, they contributed nothing, either to their Virtue or their Happiness. Contentedness gave him true Liberty under the most calamitous Circumstances ; And, without any flourish upon the matter, it may be truly said, that no Man ever carried the point of Constancy to so high a degree of Perfection.

While he was yet a Slave to *Epaphroditus*, this Brute of a Master one day took a Frolick to wrench his Leg, *Epictetus* observing him delighted with so barbarous a Pleasure, and that he continued it with greater Violence, said, with a smile, and free from any appearance of Passion, *If you go on, you will certainly break my Leg.* In short, he did

*See Orig.  
cont. Cels.  
Lib. VII.  
P. 368.  
Edit. Can-  
tabr. 1658.  
where Celsus  
pretends to  
prefer the  
constancy  
of Epictetus,  
above  
that of Je-  
sus Christ.*

did so, and then all the return he made was this, *Did I not tell you, Sir, that you would break my Leg?* Celsus transported with the admiration of Philosophy, extols this Patience so far above any other instance of it ever seen in the World, that he runs his Argument up to a most extravagant and blasphemous Impiety. If thro' the Injuries of time, and neglect, we had not lost that Book which *Arrian* composed of the Life and Death of this excellent Person, I make no doubt, but we should see a great many other like Examples of his Constancy. For it cannot reasonably be supposed, but he who could with so much calmness support the breaking of a Leg, had exercised his Patience upon several other very trying occasions.

*Enchirid.  
Cap. XVII.*

*Arrian.  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 18.*

Himself hath told us, of what use it is to accustom one's self to bear the smallest accidents with evenness of Temper. 'If your Oyl, says he, be spilt, or your Wine stolen, reflect presently, that by such slight Losses as these, the Virtue and Habit of Constancy is purchased. Accordingly, having purchased an Iron Lamp, which he accounted a very costly piece of Furniture, as he sat one day deep in thought, it was stolln out of his Hut. When he looked about, and missed it, he said with a smile, 'I shall cheat this Rogue next time, for when he comes to steal another Lamp, he shall find only an earthen one. This is not indeed an instance equal to that of his broken Leg, but yet it well deserves our mention. Because in matters of greater moment, Vain-glory, or  
some

some other Passion is apt to step in; but in those which are trivial, a Man is under no temptation to disguise, and therefore must be supposed to proceed according to the true and natural disposition of his mind.

In him the Habit of Suffering was so masterly, that no Man ever had learned that Art more perfectly. He needed no partakers in his Afflictions to soften them; but had all the Guard within himself. Nay, he thought it a sign of a very corrupt Nature, for a Man to solace himself from others sharing in his Miseries; as if what any one felt were abated or increased in proportion as his Neighbours felt more or less. And he would expose the ridiculous folly of those who aggravated their own Misfortunes, by the consideration of their being singular. 'What, says he, in case you were condemned to be beheaded, must all mankind be sentenced to the same Punishment, merely for the sake of giving you that fantastical Comfort, that other People suffer as well as you?' *Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 1.

And, as *Epictetus* his practice advanced him far above other Philosophers, so did the correctness of his Notions likewise concerning this Virtue of Resolution. For he distinguished very rightly between Courage, and Foolhardiness; between enduring and courting Sufferings and Danger. He advised no Man to chuse a rough way, when he had it in his Power to take a smooth one; nor to climb Rocks and Precipices, when Providence allowed him to travel *Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 2.  
this

this Journey of Life upon even ground. He was not like that sturdy Philosopher, who would rather suffer a Carriage to drive over his Body, than turn out of the way to avoid it. When *Epaphroditus* broke his Leg, he bore it patiently, but he could have been very well satisfied to have found him better natured. He thought it as much a Reproach to run into Danger, as to run away from it; and though Honour obliged Men to encounter it when it assaults them, yet he acknowledged no such high-flown Punctilio, as should render it commendable to prefer it before Safety, and make it their own Act and Deed.

When Reason and Duty leads us on, then he admits of no changing a right course, upon the account of any hazards or inconveniences, which may attend our persevering in it. To such occasions we must apply what he says of the advantage such trials are to good Men. 'Had  
' *Hercules* sat at home by the Fire-side,  
' and passed his Life in effeminate ease  
' and indulgence, he had never been *Her-*  
' *cules*. They were the Lion, the Hydra,  
' the Boar, and all those Monsters he so  
' laboriously defeated, which exercised his  
' Gallantry. What Honour had he ac-  
' quired, if his Virtue had not been thus  
' dangerously employed? What Benefit had  
' Mankind reaped of so great a Soul, if  
' he had declined the occasions of exert-  
' ing it? This plainly shews, that he did  
not think those Monsters desirable things,  
but only maintained the combating with,  
and quelling of them to have been an  
occasion

*Arrian.*  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 16.

Lib. I.  
Cap. 6.

occasion for discovering what kind of Person *Hercules* was, and for perpetuating his Glory in the World.

*Epictetus* hath been very just to the Reputation of *Helvidius*, for his undaunted steadiness in this Virtue. ‘ This Senator *Arrian.*  
‘ thought it became him to make a motion, which the Emperor, Senate, and Lib. 1.  
‘ People all conspired together to obstruct; Cap. 2.  
‘ but still that universal Combination was  
‘ not able to discourage him from prosecuting his purpose, and acting according  
‘ to the dictates of his own Reason and  
‘ Conscience. *Vespasian* was extremely  
‘ desirous to get something passed in the  
‘ House, which he fore-saw *Helvidius* would  
‘ be sure to oppose. He therefore, knowing  
‘ his Humour, sent a message to desire  
‘ he would not come to the House  
‘ that day. *Helvidius* his return was, that  
‘ it was in the Emperour’s Power to deprive  
‘ him of his Senatorship, but so long as he continued a Member of  
‘ that Body, he could not dispense with  
‘ himself from attending the Business of  
‘ his Post. Well, says *Vespasian*, I am content  
‘ you should be there, provided you  
‘ will be sure not to speak in the debates  
‘ that shall arise to day. I engage to be  
‘ silent, said he, provided my Voice and  
‘ Opinion be not asked. Nay, but if you  
‘ are there, you must be advised with, said  
‘ *Vespasian*; And if I be, replied *Helvidius*,  
‘ I must give my Advice freely, and according  
‘ to what I conceive most reasonable and just.  
‘ But do it at your Peril, said *Vespasian*, for be assured, if you  
‘ are

' are against what I propose, your Head  
' shall pay for it. Sir, (returned *Helvi-*  
' *dus*) did I ever tell you I was immor-  
' tal? You will do your part, and I shall  
' endeavour to do mine. It may be your  
' Business to sentence me to die, and it  
' must be mine to die bravely and chear-  
' fully. If you will please to order, I shall  
' take care to submit.

*Stobæus,*  
*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. I.

He had also a very particular regard  
for *Agrippinus*; because, that one day be-  
ing told of an Accusation preferred a-  
gainst him before the Senate; he only  
replied, ' 'Tis very well, but what of the  
' Clock is it? And when they told him  
it was about five, ' Well then, said he, let  
' us go to the Bath, it is time to be mo-  
' ving. In his return, he was met by one,  
who brought him News, that the Cause  
was given against him. ' Well, said he,  
' what have they sentenced me to, to  
Death? No, replied the other, to Banish-  
' ment only. Whereupon *Agrippinus* an-  
swered without any concern, ' Come  
' then, we will sup to Night at \* *Aricia*.

\* *A lit-  
tle Vil-  
lage not  
far from  
Rome.*

*Epictetus* had also a particular Respect  
for *Pyrrho*, because he looked upon Life  
and Death as things indifferent. He va-  
lued him more especially for the smart-  
ness of a Repartee, to one who had a  
mind to banter him upon this Subject.  
' If living and dying be indifferent in your  
' esteem, why then, says he, do not you  
' shew it by dying? For this very Rea-  
' son, replied *Pyrrho*, because they are both  
' so indifferent, that I know no reason for  
' preferring either.

In

In short, *Epictetus* made all Philosophy to consist in Continnence and Patience, for which reason he had always those two words in his Mouth, *Bear and Forbear*: Words which in *Greek* have a peculiar Elegance, there being but the difference of a single Letter between them. He frequently expressed his admiration of *Lycurgus* the *Lacedemonian's* Bravery to a Man who had put out one of his Eyes. The People delivered this Offender up to his Mercy, to be punished as he saw fit. But *Lycurgus*, instead of revenging the Injury, instructed him in Virtue, and after that he had modelled him into a good Man, he brought upon the publick Theatre the Person supposed to have long before been put to death, and to the astonishment of all the People, told them, ' That the Malefactor, whom ' they had delivered into his hands full of ' Treachery and Wickedness, he now restored to them, with all the Qualifications of Justice and true Goodness.

*Epictetus* would frequently extol the Gallantry and invincible Courage of *Lateranus*, who, when condemned by *Nero* to be beheaded, stretched out his Neck to receive the Blow; and when the Executioner gave a stroke too feeble for the business, disposed himself a second time, and laid his Neck fairer for the second stroke. The same Person, having been before examined by *Epaphroditus*, concerning the Conspiracy of which he stood accused, made this resolute Answer, ' If I had

*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 16

(b)

' any



' any thing to discover, I would tell it to thy Master, and not to thee. These Passages I the rather mention, because *Epictetus*, being a Person who made so nice and so just a Judgment of Men and Actions, it is much for the Honour of their Memory, whose behaviour merited his Approbation, and the greatest Men need no more for establishing their Reputation with considering Persons among all Posterity.

*Arrian.*

He all along professed the Stoical Philosophy, which was of all others, the most severe and exalted; and no Man of all the Antients was more expert at reducing the rigour of their Maxims and Precepts into Practice. For though he was one of the last who formally applied himself to the Rules of this Sect, yet was he one of the greatest Ornaments of it. He conformed himself in his Discourse and Behaviour, to the manner of *Socrates*, and *Zeno*, and *Diogenes*. And upon undertaking any thing of moment, used in the first place to consider, what one of those Worthies would have done upon a like occasion. Whenever he reprov'd any Person for his Vices, or instructed him in Virtue, it was his constant Custom to quote some of these Philosophers for Examples. In short, he revered them, as Persons of an extraordinary Character, far above the common standard; but above all, he was an admirer of *Socrates*, and formed his Style upon the Model he had set him. The  
Compari-

*The Life of Epictetus.*

xix

Comparisons he made use of in all his Discourses, were so familiar, so apt, so just in every Circumstance, that every Body was insensibly won over by them. He did not affect elegance and politeness in speaking, but was content with making himself intelligible, and delivering sound and good Sense in perspicuous and significant Terms. In this too he copied after *Socrates*, as indeed he did throughout, making him his universal Pattern for all his Actions, and all his Instructions.

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*Arrian.*

*Lib. I.*

*Cap. 27.*

*Lib. II.*

*Cap. 20.*

(b 2)

to

‘ to renounce his own fantastical Principles.

Fancy and Fortune, the Two things, by which Mankind are governed, were what he waged War against all his Life long. For the former, he observed that all the most important Events of humane Life, all the Revolutions that make the greatest Noise in Story, were at the bottom nothing but Fancy and Humour.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 23.

‘ What is the whole Iliad of *Homer*, but a Succession of most unreasonable Humours? *Paris* took a Fancy to carry off *Menelaus* his Wife, and *Helena* to go away with him. Now, if her Husband had been so prudent, as to account the loss of such a Wife rather a Deliverance than an Affliction, the whole Jest had been spoiled. We had had neither *Iliad* nor *Odysseus*. But upon his being as extravagantly humorous as the rest, followed Wars and Tumults, the Slaughter of infinite innocent Men, and the utter subversion of several antient Cities: And this in good truth, is the general way of the World. The latter he used to compare to a Woman of Quality, who prostitutes her self to Servants. ‘ The Life which Men led in dependance upon Fortune, he would resemble to a Torrent, foul and rapid, whose stream is dangerous to pass, fierce in its Course, and yet runs quickly off. On the other hand, a Mind devoted to Virtue, he compared to a perpetual unexhausted Spring whose Waters are clear and smooth, delightful  
‘ to

‘ to the Eye and Taste, sweet and whole-  
‘ some, free from all manner of sully or  
‘ corruption. In agreement with these No-  
tions, his vigour in the study of Virtue was  
such, that no Man ever aspired more eager-  
ly after perfection.

He had entirely renounced all the De- *Stobæus.*  
lights which gratifie the Senses, to devote *Serm. 1.*  
himself solely to the nobler Satisfaction  
of the Soul. When he was any time at  
an Entertainment, his Care was not so  
much to regale his Body, as his Mind :  
as being duly sensible, that whatever is be-  
stowed upon the Body, perishes quickly,  
and turns to no account, but whatever is  
bestowed upon the Mind, is a lasting  
Advantage, and can never be lost. This  
Consideration moved him to prefer in-  
ward Peace and Tranquillity, before the  
greatest Advantages in the World ; for, as  
it would be no Comfort to a Man to be  
drowned in a Vessel, though never so  
beautiful, or laden with the richest Treas-  
ures ; so that man makes a very ill Choice  
for himself, who for the sake of Wealth  
and Magnificence is content to be op-  
press’d with Cares and Disquiets, and pur-  
chases any degree of Grandeur, or what  
the mistaken World calls Happiness, at  
the expence of his own Ease and Lib-  
erty. To this purpose he would sometimes  
argue as follows. ‘ A Man born in *Persia*  
‘ would never be uneasie that he did not  
‘ dwell in *Greece*, all that Nature suggests  
‘ upon this occasion, being only a desire  
‘ to live happily in one’s own native *Stobæus.*  
( b 3 ) ‘ Country. *Serm. 38.*

*Arrian.*  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 16.

*Stobaeus.*

Country. When a Man therefore is born in mean and low Circumstances, why should he torture himself with ambitious Thoughts, and so eagerly aspire after Greatness and Abundance? why does he not rather employ his Care about making that Condition easie to him, which Providence at first had placed him in? Is it not much more desirable to sleep in a hard Bed, short and narrow, with good Health, than to be sick in Damask or Velvet, and toss about upon Down? And the preference is as manifestly due to a Mind perfectly composed, and easie with a moderate Fortune, when compared with the highest Elevation of worldly Greatnesses, soured by vexation and perpetual anxiety of Heart. We are infinitely in the wrong (would he often say) to charge our Misery upon our Poverty; no, 'tis our Ambition and Discontent that makes us truly miserable. And had we the whole Earth at command, the possession even of this could not set us at ease from our fears and melancholy. That must, and can only be the Work of Reason; and therefore the Man who cultivates his Mind well, and provides against this Evil, by stocking it with sound Principles, is satisfied from himself, and never complains of Poverty, or Fortune. Thus I have given you a short sample of *Epictetus* his manner of arguing upon these occasions.

He

' He would by no means bear with those, who industriously sought for some colourable pretence, either to cover, or to give countenance to what they did amiss. ' Such, he used to say, were like ' the wanton Wives of *Rome*, who, the ' better to conceal their own Shame, used ' to make *Plato's* Books of his Common-wealth, the constant Subject of their ' Commendation and Discourse, merely, ' because he there is against Women's being confined to one, as now they are. ' But in this Point too, they put a very ' partial and malicious Construction upon ' that Philosopher's Words, without attending to his true meaning and design. For it was no part of his Intent, ' that a Woman should first contract herself to one Man, and then prostitute herself to all the Sex; but the Marriage now in use he thought fit to be ' abolished, only that way might be made ' for Engagements of another kind.

This Principle appeared no less in the Practice, than it did in the Doctrine and Discourses of *Epictetus*. For, when he was sensible at any time of having failed or done amiss, his Sincerity never was solicitous to find out an Excuse for it. Nay, he upon no occasion, expressed greater Satisfaction, than in having his Faults or Defects roundly told him. ' *Rufus* one ' day happened to reproach him in terms ' immoderately severe for having overlooked a fallacy in a Syllogism, *Epictetus*, ' to mitigate his Fury, made answer, Why ' so rough and hot, Sir? I have not seen

Arrian.  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 7.

' Fire to the Capitol. Slave, replied  
' *Rufus*, dost thou think no Fault deserves  
' reproof, but burning the Capitol? Thou  
' hast been guilty of the worst this case  
' could bear. *Epictetus* was so far from  
resenting this smartness amiss, that he smiled  
at the Wit of it, acknowledged the Justice  
of the Argument, and took delight in tel-  
ling the Story publickly.

Arrian.  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 9.

Another time, one who had formerly  
lived in great Plenty, but was then re-  
duced to extremity of want, came to him  
with a Request, that he would recom-  
mend him to the People. *Epictetus* very  
ready to do him that piece of Service,  
endited a Letter in his behalf, full of  
kind and tender Expressions, represented  
his Misfortune in complaints so moving,  
that the hardest Hearts must needs have  
been softened by them; which when the  
Party concerned had perused, he gave it  
back again, telling him, ' That he made  
' that Address in hopes of receiving some  
' Relief, and not with a design to be  
' taught how to bemoan himself, for that  
' he had no need of, as not thinking that his  
' Sufferings were any real Evil. This dis-  
dainful Answer pleased *Epictetus* so exceed-  
ingly, that he never forgot it afterwards.

Arrian.  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 7.

*Epictet.*  
*Enchirid.*  
Cap. 35.

But above all, *Epictetus* was a Person  
of most nice Honour in the matter of  
Friendship. The Reader need only be  
put in mind, that he was a Stoick, to  
convince himself, that he did not pro-  
ceed upon a Principle of Interest in this  
point. ' He would not allow Men to  
' consult the Oracle for Advice, when  
' the

the Defence of a Friend was under consideration: Being satisfied, that this was a Cause, in which they were bound to engage, though with the hazard of their very Lives. As he was once maintaining, that the Wise Man only was capable of making a true Friend, and loving sincerely; a certain Person in the Company made answer, that he was none of the Wise, and yet he loved his Son with a most true and tender Affection notwithstanding. You do but imagine so, replied *Epictetus*, but I will convince you of your mistake. Have you never seen a couple of Whelps playing together? One would think these little Dogs were infinitely fond of one another; and yet do but cast a piece of Meat before them, and this Experiment will soon shew you, how far they are from the love you fancy. Just thus is the Case between you and your Son. Throw in a Bone of Contention, a bit of Land, or any such trifling Advantage, and see whether he will not wish your Death in order to get into possession, and, whether you will not hate him mortally in a very little while upon this account. Were not *Eteocles* and *Polynices* Children by the same Father and Mother? Were not they brought up all along together? Had not ten thousand solemn Protestations of the most inviolable Friendship passed on both sides? And yet, when a Kingdom fell to them, which

*Arrian.*  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 22.



‘ which is the Piece of Meat that makes  
 ‘ Dogs worry one another, were not all  
 ‘ their former Promises and Professions  
 ‘ as absolutely forgotten, as if they had  
 ‘ never been? Did not their brother-  
 ‘ ly Affection vanish in a moment? And  
 ‘ did not these two Persons do their ut-  
 ‘ most with a most savage Cruelty to de-  
 ‘ stroy and murder one another?

*Arrian.*  
 Lib. II.  
 Cap. 22.

‘ *Menelaus* entertained *Paris* with great  
 ‘ Hospitality, and so particular a Kind-  
 ‘ ness, that any Man, who had seen how  
 ‘ dear these two were, while under the  
 ‘ the same Roof, would have passed for  
 ‘ a perfect Infidel, if he had so much as  
 ‘ seemed to doubt, whether they were true  
 ‘ and eternal Friends. But here again,  
 ‘ another Bone of Contention, a fine  
 ‘ Lady, was cast between them, and this  
 ‘ gave rise to one of the longest and most  
 ‘ Bloody Wars, that hath ever been re-  
 ‘ corded in Story. So vain a thing it is  
 ‘ to conclude Persons Friends indeed,  
 ‘ whose Passions are irregular, whose  
 ‘ Minds are unstable, and so long as  
 ‘ they are enamoured with the things of  
 ‘ the World, cannot possibly be fixed,  
 ‘ and firm to any Professions or Principles  
 ‘ whatsoever.

*Arrian*  
 Lib. I.  
 Cap. 11.

‘ A Gentleman of the first Quality  
 ‘ coming one day to visit him, after some  
 ‘ Discourse about other Affairs, *Epictetus*  
 ‘ happened to enquire, whether he were  
 ‘ married, and how he liked that State;  
 ‘ the other answered, that he was in-  
 ‘ deed a married Man, but extremely un-  
 ‘ happy

happy in being so. How so? says *Epictetus*, for I presume all People that marry, do it with a prospect of bettering their Condition. True, says the Nobleman, but it is my misfortune never to enjoy one quiet hour for my extreme fondness and solicitude for my Children. I had a little Daughter sick lately, and my tenderness was so great, that I was forced to quit the House, and run away from the poor Girl. And do you reckon that an Argument of Affection? says *Epictetus*; methinks one would be glad to have their worst Enemies shew their Concern just as you do yours for your dearest Friends. The very truth is, it was not Love that drove you from your Child, but some other disorder of mind, like that of a certain Racer at *Rome*, who, when his Horse was upon full speed wrapped himself up in his Cloak, for eagerness at the Sport; and when he had won the Prize, without knowing his good Fortune, was fain to be dismounted, and refreshed with Spirits and Cordials to recover him to his Senses. Consider of this instance a little, and then you will come to judge rightly of that which you mis- cal Excels of Love for others.

Some Persons had alledged the necessity of endeavouring to be rich; upon a pretence, that Poverty incapacitates a Man for being serviceable, to his Friends. 'Alas! said *Epictetus*, how infinitely you deceive your selves! Do you think that there

*Epictet.  
Enchirid.  
Cap. 31.*

' there is no way of being useful to one's  
 ' Friend, but only by lending him Mo-  
 ' ney? No such matter. I allow Men  
 ' to take all lawful and honest methods  
 ' of getting Wealth, that, when they have  
 ' it, they may be in a Condition of Re-  
 ' lieving their Friends in want. But  
 ' then take care, that you use no me-  
 ' thods, but such as are fair and decent.  
 ' And if, as the World now goes, you  
 ' can instruct me in any such way  
 ' of growing and being Rich, I engage  
 ' to employ my utmost endeavours to be  
 ' so my self. But if you expect from  
 ' me, that I should purchase things not  
 ' really good, at the expence, and with  
 ' the certain Loss of others, which are  
 ' really so; there I must desire to be ex-  
 ' cused. And you are doubtless unrea-  
 ' sonable and unjust to the last degree,  
 ' in requiring me to submit to such hard  
 ' Conditions; and much in the wrong,  
 ' if you do not prefer the good Quali-  
 ' ties of the Mind, before the Advan-  
 ' tages of Fortune; a good Man before  
 ' a wealthy one; a Man capable of be-  
 ' ing a faithful Friend, before a rich un-  
 ' faithful pretender to Friendship. This  
 was an Answer truly worthy a Philo-  
 sopher.

But that which seems to be the pecu-  
 liar Glory and Commendation of *Epi-*  
*ctetus*, is, that of all the antient Philoso-  
 phers, he seems to have made the nearest  
 approaches to the true Christian Mora-  
 lity, and to have entertained more just  
 and

and becoming Notions, concerning the Nature and Providence of God, than any who were not enlightned by the Gospel. His Doctrines were in truth, so very agreeable to ours, that St *Augustin*, notwithstanding his violent prejudice against the generality of the Heathen Sages, thought himself in Justice bound to make one exception at least, and to speak of this Author with a great deal of Respect. Nay, so far hath he proceeded in this Point, as to make no difficulty of honouring him with the Character of a very Wise and exceeding good Man. And reason good there was, why *Epictetus* should be treated in a manner different from the rest, when we reflect, how clearly he was convinced of, and how nobly he argues for the Immortality of the Soul; the Unity and Perfections of God; the Wisdom and Goodness of Providence; and, which can be said of none besides, when Humility was so truly his Character, that neither his Morals nor his Practice have the least tincture of Vanity in them.

Another Excellence peculiar to himself, is, that he admitted all the severity of the Stoicks, without taking in any of their sourness. He hath nothing of the Insolence so usual with that Sect, of making their Romantick Wise Man in a manner equal with God. He rejected their Chimerical and impracticable Perfections, and thought a Philosopher never more so, than when most modest. So that

*De Civit.  
Des.*

*Arrian.  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 9.  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 14.  
& alibi*

'any thing to discover, I would tell it to thy Master, and not to thee. These Passages I the rather mention, because *Epictetus*, being a Person who made so nice and so just a Judgment of Men and Actions, it is much for the Honour of their Memory, whose behaviour merited his Approbation, and the greatest Men need no more for establishing their Reputation with considering Persons among all Posterity.

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*Arrian.*

Lib. I.

Cap. 27.

Lib. II.

Cap. 20.

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*Arrian.*  
*Lib. I.*  
*Cap. 23.*

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‘ but a Succession of most unreasonable  
‘ Humours? *Paris* took a Fancy to carry  
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‘ away with him. Now, if her Husband  
‘ had been so prudent, as to account the  
‘ loss of such a Wife rather a Deliverance  
‘ than an Affliction, the whole Jest had  
‘ been spoiled. We had had neither *Iliad*  
‘ nor *Odysseus*. But upon his being as ex-  
‘ travagantly humorfome as the rest, fol-  
‘ lowed Wars and Tumults, the Slaughter  
‘ of infinite innocent Men, and the utter  
‘ subversion of several antient Cities: And  
‘ this in good truth, is the general way of  
‘ the World. The latter he used to com-  
‘ pare to a Woman of Quality, who pro-  
‘ stitutes her self to Servants. ‘ The Life  
‘ which Men led in dependance upon  
‘ Fortune, he would resemble to a Tor-  
‘ rent, foul and rapid, whose stream is  
‘ dangerous to pass, fierce in its Course, and  
‘ yet runs quickly off. On the other hand,  
‘ a Mind devoted to Virtue, he compared  
‘ to a perpetual unexhausted Spring whose  
‘ Waters are clear and smooth, delightful  
‘ to

‘ to the Eye and Taste, sweet and whole-  
‘ some, free from all manner of sully or  
‘ corruption. In agreement with these No-  
tions, his vigour in the study of Virtue was  
such, that no Man ever aspired more eager-  
ly after perfection.

He had entirely renounced all the De- *Stobæus.*  
lights which gratifie the Senses, to devote *Serm. 1.*  
himself solely to the nobler Satisfaction  
of the Soul. When he was any time at  
an Entertainment, his Care was not so  
much to regale his Body, as his Mind :  
as being duly sensible, that whatever is be-  
stowed upon the Body, perishes quickly,  
and turns to no account, but whatever is  
bestowed upon the Mind, is a lasting  
Advantage, and can never be lost. This  
Consideration moved him to prefer in-  
ward Peace and Tranquillity, before the  
greatest Advantages in the World ; for, as  
it would be no Comfort to a Man to be  
drowned in a Vessel, though never so  
beautiful, or laden with the richest Treas-  
ures ; so that man makes a very ill Choice  
for himself, who for the sake of Wealth  
and Magnificence, is content to be op-  
press’d with Cares and Disquiets, and pur-  
chases any degree of Grandeur, or what  
the mistaken World calls Happiness, at  
the expence of his own Ease and Lib-  
erty. To this purpose he would sometimes  
argue as follows. ‘ A Man born in *Persia*  
‘ would never be uneasy that he did not  
‘ dwell in *Greece*, all that Nature suggests  
‘ upon this occasion, being only a desire  
‘ to live happily in one’s own native *Stobæus.*

( b 3 )

‘ Countrey. *Serm. 38.*



*Arrian.*  
 Lib. II.  
 Cap. 16.

*Stobæus.*

‘ Country. When a Man therefore is  
 ‘ born in mean and low Circumstan-  
 ‘ ces, why should he torture himself with  
 ‘ ambitious Thoughts, and so eagerly a-  
 ‘ spire after Greatness and Abundance ?  
 ‘ why does he not rather employ his Care  
 ‘ about making that Condition easie to  
 ‘ him, which Providence at first had plac-  
 ‘ ed him in ? Is it not much more de-  
 ‘ sirable to sleep in a hard Bed, short  
 ‘ and narrow, with good Health, than  
 ‘ to be sick in Damask or Velvet, and  
 ‘ toss about upon Down ? And the pre-  
 ‘ ference is as manifestly due to a Mind  
 ‘ perfectly compos’d, and easie with a  
 ‘ moderate Fortune, when compared with  
 ‘ the highest Elevation of worldly Great-  
 ‘ nesses, soured by vexation and perpet-  
 ‘ ual anxiety of Heart. We are infinite-  
 ‘ ly in the wrong ( would he often say )  
 ‘ to charge our Misery upon our Pover-  
 ‘ ty ; no, ’tis our Ambition and Discon-  
 ‘ tent that makes us truly miserable. And  
 ‘ had we the whole Earth at command,  
 ‘ the possession even of this could not set  
 ‘ us at ease from our fears and melan-  
 ‘ choly. That must, and can only be the  
 ‘ Work of Reason ; and therefore the  
 ‘ Man who cultivates his Mind well, and  
 ‘ provides against this Evil, by stocking  
 ‘ it with sound Principles, is satisfied from  
 ‘ himself, and never complains of Pover-  
 ‘ ty, or Fortune. Thus I have given you  
 a short sample of *Epictetus* his manner of  
 arguing upon these occasions.

He

‘ He would by no means bear with those, who industriously sought for some colourable pretence, either to cover, or to give countenance to what they did amiss. ‘ Such, he used to say, were like ‘ the wanton Wives of *Rome*, who, the ‘ better to conceal their own Shame, used ‘ to make *Plato’s* Books of his Common- ‘ wealth, the constant Subject of their ‘ Commendation and Discourse, merely, ‘ because he there is against Women’s being confined to one, as now they are. ‘ But in this Point too, they put a very ‘ partial and malicious Construction upon ‘ that Philosopher’s Words, without attending to his true meaning and design. For it was no part of his Intent, ‘ that a Woman should first contract herself to one Man, and then prostitute herself to all the Sex; but the Marriage now in use he thought fit to be ‘ abolished, only that way might be made ‘ for Engagements of another kind.

This Principle appeared no less in the Practice, than it did in the Doctrine and Discourses of *Epictetus*. For, when he was sensible at any time of having failed or done amiss, his Sincerity never was solicitous to find out an Excuse for it. Nay, he upon no occasion, expressed greater Satisfaction, than in having his Faults or Defects roundly told him. ‘ *Rufus* one ‘ day happened to reproach him in terms ‘ immoderately severe for having overlooked a fallacy in a Syllogism, *Epictetus*, ‘ to mitigate his Fury, made answer, Why ‘ so rough and hot, Sir? I have not set

*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 7.

' Fire to the Capitol. Slave, replied  
' *Rufus*, dost thou think no Fault deserves  
' reproof, but burning the Capitol? Thou  
' hast been guilty of the worst this case  
' could bear. *Epictetus* was so far from  
resenting this smartness amiss, that he smiled  
at the Wit of it, acknowledged the Justice  
of the Argument, and took delight in tel-  
ling the Story publicly.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 9.

Another time, one who had formerly  
lived in great Plenty, but was then re-  
duced to extremity of want, came to him  
with a Request, that he would recom-  
mend him to the People. *Epictetus* very  
ready to do him that piece of Service,  
endited a Letter in his behalf, full of  
kind and tender Expressions, represented  
his Misfortune in complaints so moving,  
that the hardest Hearts must needs have  
been softened by them; which when the  
Party concerned had perused, he gave it  
back again, telling him, ' That he made  
' that Address in hopes of receiving some  
' Relief, and not with a design to be  
' taught how to bemoan himself, for that  
' he had no need of, as not thinking that his  
' Sufferings were any real Evil. This dis-  
dainful Answer pleased *Epictetus* so exceed-  
ingly, that he never forgot it afterwards.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 7.

*Epictet.*  
*Enchirid.*  
Cap. 39.

But above all, *Epictetus* was a Person  
of most nice Honour in the matter of  
Friendship. The Reader need only be  
put in mind, that he was a Stoick, to  
convince himself, that he did not pro-  
ceed upon a Principle of Interest in this  
point. ' He would not allow Men to  
' consult the Oracle for Advice, when  
' the

the Defence of a Friend was under consideration: Being satisfied, that this was a Cause, in which they were bound to engage, though with the hazard of their very Lives. As he was once maintaining, that the Wise Man only was capable of making a true Friend, and loving sincerely; a certain Person in the Company made answer, that he was none of the Wise, and yet he loved his Son with a most true and tender Affection notwithstanding. You do but imagine so, replied *Epictetus*, but I will convince you of your mistake. Have you never seen a couple of Whelps playing together? One would think these little Dogs were infinitely fond of one another; and yet do but cast a piece of Meat before them, and this Experiment will soon shew you, how far they are from the love you fancy. Just thus is the Case between you and your Son. Throw in a Bone of Contention, a bit of Land, or any such trifling Advantage, and see whether he will not wish your Death in order to get into possession, and, whether you will not hate him mortally in a very little while upon this account. Were not *Eteocles* and *Polynices* Children by the same Father and Mother? Were not they brought up all along together? Had not ten thousand solemn Protestations of the most inviolable Friendship passed on both sides? And yet, when a Kingdom fell to them,

which

*Arrian.*  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 22.

‘ which is the Piece of Meat that makes  
 ‘ Dogs worry one another, were not all  
 ‘ their former Promises and Professions  
 ‘ as absolutely forgotten, as if they had  
 ‘ never been? Did not their brotherly  
 ‘ Affection vanish in a moment? And  
 ‘ did not these two Persons do their ut-  
 ‘ most with a most savage Cruelty to de-  
 ‘ stroy and murder one another?

*Arrian.*  
 Lib. II.  
 Cap. 22.

‘ *Menelaus* entertained *Paris* with great  
 ‘ Hospitality, and so particular a Kind-  
 ‘ ness, that any Man, who had seen how  
 ‘ dear these two were, while under the  
 ‘ the same Roof, would have passed for  
 ‘ a perfect Infidel, if he had so much as  
 ‘ seemed to doubt, whether they were true  
 ‘ and eternal Friends. But here again,  
 ‘ another Bone of Contention, a fine  
 ‘ Lady, was cast between them, and this  
 ‘ gave rise to one of the longest and most  
 ‘ Bloody Wars, that hath ever been re-  
 ‘ corded in Story. So vain a thing it is  
 ‘ to conclude Persons Friends indeed,  
 ‘ whose Passions are irregular, whose  
 ‘ Minds are unstable, and so long as  
 ‘ they are enamoured with the things of  
 ‘ the World, cannot possibly be fixed,  
 ‘ and firm to any Professions or Principles  
 ‘ whatsoever.

*Arrian*  
 Lib. I.  
 Cap. 11.

‘ A Gentleman of the first Quality  
 ‘ coming one day to visit him, after some  
 ‘ Discourse about other Affairs, *Epictetus*  
 ‘ happened to enquire, whether he were  
 ‘ married, and how he liked that State;  
 ‘ the other answered, that he was in-  
 ‘ deed a married Man, but extremely un-  
 ‘ happy

happy in being so. How so? says *Epictetus*, for I presume all People that marry, do it with a prospect of bettering their Condition. True, says the Nobleman, but it is my misfortune never to enjoy one quiet hour for my extreme fondness and solicitude for my Children. I had a little Daughter sick lately, and my tenderness was so great, that I was forced to quit the House, and run away from the poor Girl. And do you reckon that an Argument of Affection? says *Epictetus*; methinks one would be glad to have their worst Enemies shew their Concern just as you do yours for your dearest Friends. The very truth is, it was not Love that drove you from your Child, but some other disorder of mind, like that of a certain Racer at *Rome*, who, when his Horse was upon full speed wrapped himself up in his Cloak, for eagerness at the Sport; and when he had won the Prize, without knowing his good Fortune, was fain to be dismounted, and refreshed with Spirits and Cordials to recover him to his Senses. Consider of this instance a little, and then you will come to judge rightly of that which you mis- cal Excels of Love for others.

Some Persons had alledged the necessity of endeavouring to be rich; upon a pretence, that Poverty incapacitates a Man for being serviceable, to his Friends. 'Alas! said *Epictetus*, how infinitely you deceive your selves! Do you think that there

*Epictet.  
Enchirid.  
Cap. 31.*

there is no way of being useful to one's Friend, but only by lending him Money? No such matter. I allow Men to take all lawful and honest methods of getting Wealth, that, when they have it, they may be in a Condition of Relieving their Friends in want. But then take care, that you use no methods, but such as are fair and decent. And if, as the World now goes, you can instruct me in any such way of growing and being Rich, I engage to employ my utmost endeavours to be so my self. But if you expect from me, that I should purchase things not really good, at the expence, and with the certain Loss of others, which are really so; there I must desire to be excused. And you are doubtless unreasonable and unjust to the last degree, in requiring me to submit to such hard Conditions; and much in the wrong, if you do not prefer the good Qualities of the Mind, before the Advantages of Fortune; a good Man before a wealthy one; a Man capable of being a faithful Friend, before a rich unfaithful pretender to Friendship. This was an Answer truly worthy a Philosopher.

But that which seems to be the peculiar Glory and Commendation of *Epictetus*, is, that of all the antient Philosophers, he seems to have made the nearest approaches to the true Christian Morality, and to have entertained more just and

and becoming Notions, concerning the Nature and Providence of God, than any who were not enlightned by the Gospel. His Doctrines were in truth, so very agreeable to ours, that St *Augustin*, notwithstanding his violent prejudice against the generality of the Heathen Sages, thought himself in Justice bound to make one exception at least, and to speak of this Author with a great deal of Respect. Nay, so far hath he proceeded in this Point, as to make no difficulty of honouring him with the Character of a very Wise and exceeding good Man. And reason good there was, why *Epictetus* should be treated in a manner different from the rest, when we reflect, how clearly he was convinced of, and how nobly he argues for the Immortality of the Soul; the Unity and Perfections of God; the Wisdom and Goodness of Providence; and, which can be said of none besides, when Humility was so truly his Character, that neither his Morals nor his Practice have the least tincture of Vanity in them.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 9.  
Lib. II.  
Cap. 14.  
& alibi

Another Excellence peculiar to himself, is, that he admitted all the severity of the Stoicks, without taking in any of their sourness. He hath nothing of the Insolence so usual with that Sect, of making their Romantick Wise Man in a manner equal with God. He rejected their Chimerical and impracticable Perfections, and thought a Philosopher never more so, than when most modest. So that



that he reformed Stoicism as well as professed it, and espoused no Principles so implicitly, as not to leave himself a Liberty of departing from, or altering them for the better, as he saw occasion. If then St. *Jerome* did not grudge a Philosopher of that Sect the Honour of being numbred among the Saints, What place shall we allow *Epictetus*? Who, besides that he vindicates the Immortality of the Soul, as strenuously as *Seneca*, or ever a Stoick of them all; hath the advantage over his Brethren, in declaring openly against that most impious and anti-christian Maxim, maintained by the rest of this Profession, (*viz.*) *That a Man may lawfully die by his own hands.*

*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 9.

*Arrian.*  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 9.  
& 24.

Lib. I.  
Cap. 9.

I am sensible *Wolffius* thinks him as deep in here as the rest, but this seems to be only from a wrong Interpretation of that Passage, *That when a Man is weary of playing his part, he may be comforted with remembring, that the door is open.* But the meaning of the *Door being open*, is not, that we may go out when we please, but that our term of Life is so short, that it cannot be long before we are called out. That this was his true Intention is evident from another Passage, where he exposes the folly of being full of Care for to-morrow. *If you have any Sustainance* (says he) *you will be supported; if not, you will make your exit; the Door stands always open.* The Phrase here is the same, and let *Epictetus* be his own Expolitor, who two or three Lines before hath this remarkable

able Sentence. Let us wait God's leisure to deliver us from enraged Tyrants, when he gives the signal, then march out to him. And again, How ridiculous is it to suppose that a Man ought rather to be cut in pieces than desert the Post his General hath fixed him in, and to imagine our selves at Liberty to quit the Post, God hath set us in, whenever we please.

But to return. The unblemished Probity so remarkable throughout his whole Conversation, was the very thing which recommended him to the particular Favour and Esteem of all the greatest Men of the Age in which he lived. He contracted a particular intimacy with *Favonius*, and *Herod* the Sophist, who are two very eminent Persons in Antiquity; as we find by *Philostratus* in his *Lives* *Spartian*, as I observed before, ranks him among the Emperour *Adrian's* most considerable Friends. *Themistius* in his Oration to the Emperour *Jovian*, says, that he received several marks of Honour, and particular Respect from the two *Antonines*. And accordingly *Marcus Aurelius*, in his Book of Meditations, *εἰς ἑαυτὸν*, or Soliloquies, mentions him more than once with so great regard, as to set him upon the same level with the *Socrates's*, the *Zeno's*, and the *Chrysippus's*. In short, his Reputation was so great, that *Lucian*, who calls him a Wonderful Man, rallies an ignorant Fellow for purchasing *Epictetus* his Earthen Lamp at three thousand Drachms, upon a vain imagination, that studying by the

*A. Gell.*  
*Lib. XVII.*  
*Cap. 19.*  
*Lib. I.*  
*Cap. 2.*

*Spart. in*  
*Adr.*  
*Themist.*  
*Orat. 12.*  
*ad Jovian.*  
*Lib. I.*  
*Sect. 7.*  
*Lib. XI.*  
*Sect. 34.*  
*36, &c.*

*Dialog.*  
*advers.*  
*Indoct.*  
*multos*  
*Libros*  
*ementem.*

A. Gell.  
Lib. I.  
Cap. 2.

Cap. 19.

the Light of this Lamp, would inspire him with the Wisdom of its former Master. Whatever he said carried such Force, and met with so general Acceptance and Respect, that no body could stand out against his Arguments. 'Herod the Sophist, met one day with a pert young Blade, who pretended himself Professor of the Stoick Philosophy; and talked and swaggered at so insolent a rate, as if he thought all the *Greeks* and *Latins* to be mere *Ignoramus's* in comparison of himself. After having heard patiently all he had to say, the way Herod took to reprove and put him out of countenance, was to lend for *Arrian's* Collection of *Epictetus* his Discourses, and turn him to that Chapter in the Second Book, where he speaks of those conceited People, who talk much, and fancy themselves Philosophers, because they can do it fluently. This so confounded that forward young Gentleman, that he had not one word to say for himself. We may judge from this instance, of what Authority *Epictetus* and his Doctrines were at that time in the World.

Of all his Scholars, *Arrian* is the only one, whose Name hath been transmitted with Reputation to Posterity; and He is such a one, as sufficiently demonstrates the Excellence of his Master, though we should suppose that he alone had been of his forming. For this is the very Person, who was afterwards advanced to be the

Præceptor

Præceptor of *Antonine*, surnamed the Pious, and distinguished by the Title of *Xenophon the Younger*; because, like that Philosopher, he committed to writing the Dictates delivered by his Master in his Life time: and published them in one Volume under the Name of *Epictetus* his *Discourses* or *Dissertations*; which at present we have in four Books. After this he composed a little Book, called his *Enchiridion*, which is a short Compendium of all *Epictetus* his Philosophical Principles; and hath ever been acknowledged for one of the most valuable and beautiful Pieces of antient Morality. He likewise wrote another large Book, of the Life and Death of *Epictetus*, which is now unfortunately lost. *Marcus Aurelius* mentions a Tract called the Commentaries of *Epictetus*, which he had read with great application. But these probably are the same with those *Discourses* mentioned before. For *Arrian* in his Preface to those Books gives them the Title of *ὑπομνήματα*. Probably this double Title might proceed from the different form, under which they were published, in two several Copies, during *Arrian's* own Life. I am also apt to believe, that these Dissertations were formerly larger, than we now enjoy them; and possibly, \* there might not be four only, but five or six Books of them. Thus much is certain,

Geneb. in Chron.  
A. Gell.  
Lib. XVII.  
Cap. 19.

Simpl. in  
Fovin.

De scripto.  
ὑπομνή-  
ματα.  
Arrian  
Pref. L.  
Gell.

\* Some  
say XII. of  
these cal-  
led Δια-

λίζεις, and VIII. entitled Διατεταλ. See Holsten de Vis.  
de Script. Porphyrii. Pag. 3. Edit. Cantabr. 1635.

(c)

that

*A. Gell.*  
Lib. XIX.  
Cap. I.

that *A. Gellius* cites a Passage out of the fifth, and that *Stobæus* relates several, as of the same Author, which no where occur in his Writings extant at this day. It is not unlikely, that *Arrian*, in a second Edition, might think fit to leave out some things published in a former, and that he might new cast the Work, by reducing six Books unto four. But however that be, I can by no means credit *Suidas* his Account, when he tells us, that *Epictetus* was himself a great Writer; for this is very hard for any Man to conceive, who hath read *Arrian* at all, and is acquainted with *Epictetus* his Manner, and Principles.

*Altercat.*  
*ad Calcem.*  
Edit. *Wolf.*

There are besides some Answers pretended to be made by him to Questions put by *Adrian* the Emperour; but any Man who gives himself the trouble of reading them, will easily discover the Forgery, and that they cannot belong to this Philosopher. *Wolffius*, indeed, did once put us in hopes of seeing some Letters written by this Great Man published, which he had been informed were in the Library at *Florence*. But in all probability, the Person who communicated this piece of News to him, was not rightly informed himself, and we are like to wait a great while, before our Eyes are gratified with the sight of that Curiosity.

*Suid.* in  
*Epictet.*

We have no account that can be depended upon, either of what Distemper, or about what time *Epictetus* died. *Suidas*, indeed affirms, that he died when *Marcus Aurelius* was Emperour; but I am very apt

to suspect the Truth of this Assertion. *Salmaj.* in Annot. ad Epictet. & Simpl. *Salmaj.* who hath enlarged upon this matter, is of Opinion that *Suidas* is mistaken; and produces several Reasons for thinking so, which I shall consider in this place.

1. The First is, that the same Author *Pag. 2.* tells us, *Epictetus* was Slave to *Epaphroditus*, a Captain of *Nero's* Life-Guard. Now from the Death of *Nero*, to the beginning of *Marcus Aurelius* his Reign, there intervened no less than Ninety Four Years. That which adds more to the improbability of this account, is, that we must suppose *Epictetus* some Years old, before he was capable either of doing *Epaphroditus* any Service, or of removing from *Hierapolis* to *Rome*. So that, according to this computation, *Epictetus* may be presumed to have reached a Hundred and Fifteen Years, or thereabouts, which it is not very easie to believe. This Conjecture carries somewhat of Argument in it, though it be not absolutely conclusive; because, as *Lipsius* hath *Lips. M.* observed judiciously enough, 'tis possible *nuduct. ad* he might not be taken into *Epaphroditus* *Stoic Phil.* his Family, till after *Nero's* Death. But *Lib. I.* then in answer to this Solution, it may be replied, that \* *Epaphroditus* being distinguished by that Title of Captain of *Nero's* Guard, it is more credible, that *Nero* *\* I cannot but observe here a gross mistake in the Preface to* was living at the time when *Epictetus* belonged to him, and that he served him whilst in that Quality. *Berkelius's Edition of the Enchirid. with Wolfius his Notes printed at Lugd. and Amst. 1670. where this Epaphroditus*

is taken for the Person of that Name, Coloss. iv. 18. who brought that Church's Charity to St. Paul at Rome. 'Tis true that Chapter mentions Saints of Caesar's household, ver. 23. But the Character given of Epictetus his Master, will not incline us to believe him one of them. And though it be highly probable that Epictetus had some knowledge of the Christian Doctrine, (as indeed the Philosophers who wrote after the publication of the Gospel, do by their way of arguing so much more refined than their Predecessors, seem all to have had;) yet we have little ground to imagine, that a Person of such infamous Qualities, such insolence, and barbarity, and meanness of Spirit, as this Epaphroditus either instructed him in it, or ever imbibed it heartily himself.

*Salmaf.*  
*ib. Marc.*  
*Antonin.*  
*Lib. I.*  
*Cap. 7.*

2. The Second Argument is, that *Marcus Aurelius* does not reckon this Philosopher among the Persons with whom he had any Conversation, but only speaks of reading some Discourses of his, which *Junius Rusticus* had communicated to him. This to me seems to carry less Strength than the former. For, besides that *Epictetus* had retreated to *Nicopolis* long before that time, we may allow his Death to have happened, much about the beginning of this Emperour's Reign. *Suidas* affirms no more, than that he lived till the time of *Marcus Aurelius*. And he might very well be supposed to live till the beginning of his Reign, without implying any necessity of this Emperour's seeing his Discourses, till after the Author was dead.

3. The Third Reason is, in my Judgment, of little or no Consideration. *Dialog. advers. Indoct. multos Libros ementem.* Epictetus his Lamp was sold in Lucian's time, and from thence it is inferred that Epictetus was dead before that Sale was made. But this is no consequence at all. For we have all the Reason in the World to believe, that Lucian out-lived Marcus Aurelius. And so this Lamp being sold while Lucian was yet alive, is no bar to Epictetus his being alive in Marcus *Salmas. pag. 3.* his Reign. Nay, it might very well happen, that the Lamp might be sold in Epictetus his own life-time, and if this be admitted, that Circumstance will create us no difficulty at all.

4. The Fourth is, that A. Gellius, *Salmas. ibid. P. 2. & 3. A. Gell. Lib. II. Cap. 18.* who wrote under Antoninus Pius, or at least in the very beginning of Marcus Aurelius, says of Epictetus, that the Memory of that Philosopher was still fresh at Rome. But Salmasius hath not produced that Passage entire, for A. Gellius does not speak there of his memory in general, but of every body's remembering, that he had been a Slave; which alters the case very much.

5. The last Reason alledged by *Sal. A. Gell. masius* is taken from that Expression of *Lib. XVII. Cap. 19.* Gellius, I have heard Favorinus say; And since Favorinus died under Adrian, Salmasius concludes it impossible for Epictetus not to have died before the Reign  
(c 3) of



of *Marcus Aurelius*. Now this Reason is not convincing, because *Favorinus* might very well inform *A. Gellius* what *Epictetus* had said upon some certain occasions, though *Epictetus* himself were still alive. But still it must be confessed, there is some Ground for urging it. For *A. Gellius* who wrote his Book under *Antoninus Pius* the Predecessor to *Marcus Aurelius*, when mentioning *Epictetus*, does it in these terms, *Epictetus would say, That venerable old Man used to say, Such a one hath told me, that Epictetus was wont to say, and the like.* Now this is a manner of speaking very unusual, and odd, when the Person spoken of is yet in being. And I am indeed the rather inclined to embrace the Opinion *Salmasius* contends for, because it seems to me highly probable, that *Epictetus* was dead before the composing of *Arrian's* Book, in which he collects his Discourses. And if so, I see no possibility how *Suidas* his account of his living down to *Marcus Aurelius* his time should stand good. For it is evident, that Book was publish'd when *A. Gellius* wrote his *Noctes Atticae*, and that is as much as to say, that it was well known, and commonly read in the Reign of *Antoninus Pius*. I own it may be objected, that *Arrian* might collect and publish those Dissertations before the Death of his Master; but I can scarce think he did so, it being highly improbable, and a thing out of the common way, to set forth the Discourses

Discourses and memorable Actions of a Person surviving their publication. And therefore without some Authority to warrant such a Conjecture, bare Presumptions ought not to prevail for its being received.

One Difficulty more indeed occurs to me, which *Salmasius* takes no notice of, and yet in my apprehension, it is as considerable as any of the former. 'Tis the space of time between the Death of *Nero*, and the Edict of *Domitian* for banishing the Philosophers. Now this very *Euseb. in little, if at all, exceeds Twenty Years. Chron.* For that Edict is placed in the Eighth of *Domitian*. And, if *Lipsius* his Notion be admitted, that *Epictetus* did not serve *Epaphroditus*, till after *Nero's* Death, the difficulty grows yet more upon us. For at that rate he could not be above Eighteen or Nineteen at most, when he left *Rome* in obedience to the Emperour's prohibition. But this is never to be reconciled with *A. Gellius* his account, who speaks of him as a Person of great Repute at that time; and constrained to withdraw to *Nicopolis* in the Quality of a Philosopher concerned in the Edict. We can hardly allow him this Character at less than Thirty Years old; and, according to that calculation, to bring him down as far as *Marcus Aurelius* his Reign will ask a Hundred and Eight or Nine Years. And yet so many we cannot afford him neither, when it is remembered that *Lucian*, who was his contemporary

Lucian. in  
Dialog cui  
Titulus  
Macrobij.

Orat. ad  
Jovian.

porary, makes no mention of him, in that Dialogue, concerning *Persons who lived to a great Age*. I acknowledge, that *Eusebius* takes notice of a second Edict against the Philosophers, not published till the Fifteenth of *Domitian*; but, besides that he stands single in this Point, and is not strengthened by the Testimony of any other Chronologer or Historian, *Scaliger* in his *Animadversions* hath observed expressly, that the Decree meant by *A. Gellius* (which is plainly that under debate at present) was published in the Eighth Year of *Domitian*. This Argument is of so great weight with me, that it would quite bear down all that *Suidas* hath said, were it not, that I find myself still in some suspense, from a passage in *Themistius*; who positively affirms, that the Two *Antonines* shewed *Epictetus* particular Marks of their Favour and Esteem. But this Objection too may be taken off, by replying, that Orators in their Speeches do not always tie themselves up to the same Rules of Exactness, which are strictly required of a Faithful Historian: Or else by saying, that *Marcus Aurelius* might express an Honour for *Epictetus*, in the time of *Adrian*, and *Antoninus Pius*, and before he came to be Emperour himself; Or lastly, that this Veneration was paid to his Character and Memory, after the Person was dead. And this we plainly find done, in the Books he hath left us, where *Epictetus* is mentioned upon several occasions with a more than ordinary Respect. Upon

Upon the whole Matter, the Difficulties on both sides of the Question are such, that I will not take upon me to determine either way; but shall satisfy my self, with thus laying before my Reader what may be said for, and against, this Relation of *Suidas*. And yet, if I may be admitted to interpose my own private Opinion, this, I confess, inclines rather to *Salmasius*, and I am apt to think *Epictetus* was dead before *Marcus Aurelius* began to Reign. For, besides that *Suidas* is not always in the right, we have an Instance in the Person before us, where he is manifestly in the wrong; That, I mean, in which he affirms *Epictetus* himself to have been a great Writer of Books. And he, who hath mistaken in this Point, may be presumed to have mistaken in the calculation of his Age too. But whenever he died, 'tis certain his loss was much lamented by all the Men of Note then alive, and his Memory will be valuable and glorious among all succeeding Ages of the World. And thus I have given the Reader what scattered Remains I could gather up concerning him, which I hope will be the more kindly received, because the first attempt of the kind that I know of, since that Life written by *Arrian* hath been lost.

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A

# CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

For making a probable Conjecture of  
the time when *Epictetus* died : ac-  
cording to the fore-going Account.

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*Note that the vulgar Years of Christ are  
two less than these, and so this Account be-  
gins 54.*

<i>Years of Rome.</i>	<i>Years of Christ.</i>	<i>Years from Nero.</i>	
806	56	1	<i>Eight Months from O- ctober 13th.</i>
807	57	2	
808	58	3	<i>Nero.</i>
809	59	4	
810	60	5	

*Years*

# A Chronological Table, &c.

<i>Years of Rome.</i>	<i>Years of Christ.</i>	<i>Years from Nero.</i>	
811	61	6	
812	62	7	<i>Epaphroditus.</i>
813	63	8	<i>Epictetus.</i>
814	64	9	
815	65	10	
816	66	11	
817	67	12	
818	68	13	
819	69	14	<i>Galba, Otho, Vitellius.</i>
820	70	15	
821	71	16	<i>Fl. Vespasian.</i>
822	72	17	
823	73	18	<i>Helvidius. Arr. Lib. I.</i>
824	74	19	<i>Cap. 2.</i>
825	75	20	
826	76	21	
827	77	22	
828	78	23	
829	79	24	
830	80	25	<i>Tit. Vespasian;</i>
831	81	26	
832	82	27	
833	83	28	<i>Domitian.</i>
834	84	29	
835	85	30	
836	86	31	
837	87	32	
838	88	33	
839	89	34	
840	90	35	<i>Philosophers banished.</i>
841	91	36	<i>Euphrates Philos. vid.</i>
842	92	37	<i>Arrian. L.III. C.15. IV. 8.</i>
			<i>Plin. Epist. I. 10:</i>

*Years*

# A Chronological Table, &c.

<i>Years of Rome.</i>	<i>Years of Christ.</i>	<i>Years from Nero.</i>	
843	93	38	
844	94	39	
845	95	40	
846	96	41	
847	97	42	Second Decree for
848	98	43	banishing Philosophers.
849	99	44	<i>Nerva.</i>
850	100	45	<i>Trajan.</i>
851	101	46	
852	102	47	<i>Corn. Tacitus.</i>
853	103	48	<i>Pliny the Younger.</i>
854	104	49	
855	105	50	
856	106	51	
857	107	52	
858	108	53	
859	109	54	
860	110	55	
861	111	56	
862	112	57	
863	113	58	
864	114	59	
865	115	60	
866	116	61	
867	117	62	
868	118	63	
869	119	64	<i>Adrian.</i>
870	120	65	<i>Plutarch. Cæron. Fa-</i>
871	121	66	<i>mous about this time.</i>
872	122	67	
873	123	68	<i>Euphrates's Death.</i>
874	124	69	<i>Arrian.</i>

*Years*



# A Chronological Table, &c.

<i>Years of Rome.</i>	<i>Years of Christ.</i>	<i>Years from Nero.</i>	
875	125	70	
876	126	71	
877	127	72	
878	128	73	<i>Favorinus and Polemo.</i>
879	129	74	
880	130	75	
881	131	76	
882	132	77	
883	133	78	<i>Aulus Gellius.</i>
884	134	79	
885	135	80	
886	136	81	
887	137	82	
888	138	83	
889	139	84	
890	140	85	<i>Antoninus Pius, to</i>
891	141	86	<i>whom Arrian was Pra-</i>
892	142	87	<i>ceptor.</i>
893	143	88	<i>Lucian wrote before</i>
894	144	89	<i>and about this time;</i>
895	145	90	<i>died at the beginning of</i>
896	146	91	<i>Commodus's Reign.</i>
897	147	92	
898	148	93	
899	149	94	
910	150	95	
911	151	96	<i>Epictetus's Death.</i>
912	152	97	
913	153	98	
914	154	99	
915	155	100	
916	156	101	

*Years*

# A Chronological Table, &c.

<i>Years of Rome.</i>	<i>Years of Christ.</i>	<i>Years from Nero.</i>	
907	157	102	
908	158	103	
909	159	104	
910	160	105	
911	161	106	
912	162	107	
913	163	108	<i>Marcus Aurelius.</i>

*EPICLETUS*

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*EPICTETUS*  
HIS  
ENCHIRIDION,  
With  
*SIMPLICIUS*  
HIS  
COMMENTARY.

**I**F the Reader be curious to know *Epictetus's* Character, he may find it at large in an Account of his Life and Death, written by *Arrian*,\* who also compiled the Discourses of *Epictetus*, and digested them into several distinct Tracts. The same *Arrian* composed this very Book too, which goes by the Name of *Enchiridion*, being a Collection out of *Epictetus's* Discourses, of such Remarks and Rules, as he thought most seasonable and necessary, and most likely to affect Mens Minds. For thus much *Arrian* himself declares in his Epistle Dedicatory to

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\* The Reader will find all that is material not only in *Arrian*, but others who have given an account of *Epictetus*, prefixed to this Edition, so far as occurs at present to the Memory and Observation of the Translator.

B



\* *Messa-*

\* *Meſſalinus*, to whom he addreſſed this Book, as being both a particular Friend of his, and an exceeding Admirer of *Epiſtetus*. (Though the ſame Things indeed, and delivered in almoſt the ſame Expreſſions, lye ſcattered up and down in thoſe Writings of *Arrian*, which are called *Epiſtetus's* Diſcourſes)

The principal Deſign of this Book (if Men would but ſuffer themſelves to be wrought upon by it, and not think it ſufficient to give him the Hearing only, but let it ſeriously affect their Minds, and would reduce what they read into Practice) is, To ſet our Souls as Free, as when their Great Father and Creator firſt gave them to us; to diſengage them from all thoſe ſlaviſh Fears, and confounding Troubles, and other Corruptions of Humane Nature, which are wont to ſubdue and tyrannize over them.

It is called an *Enchiridion*, or Manual, becauſe all Perſons, who are deſirous to live as they ought, ſhould be perfect in this Book, and have it always ready at hand: A Book of as conſtant and neceſſary uſe as the Sword (which commonly went by this Name, and from whence the Metaphor ſeems to be taken) is to a Soldier.

The Diſcourſes are lively and moving; and all but the Stupid and Sortiſh muſt needs be affected with them: And, though not all equally, yet all in ſome degree: And it is to be hoped, they will be ſo affected, as to be made ſenſible of their own Failings, and Infirmities; and awakened into ſerious Thoughts and Endeavours of Reformation. In ſhort, That Man, that can read theſe Reflections, without any Impreſſion or Concern at all, is loſt to all the Methods of Amendment in this World, and can only be made wiſer by the † Fiery Diſcipline of the Next.

\* *Meſſalinus*.] So *Salmaſius* proves it ought to be read, and not *Maſgalenus*. See his Note on the Place.

† The *Fiery Diſcipline of the next*.] This Expreſſion proceeds upon an Opinion of the *Pythagoreans* and *Platonists*, which ſuppoſed Men (like Metals) to be refined from their Dross, and their

The Instructions he gives, are built upon Humane Nature, and the Foundation of them all is Man, considered as a Rational Soul, making use of the Body, as its Instrument of Operation. Upon this Account, he allows all those innocent Pleasures, which Nature requires, and such as are necessary to keep up a Succession of Mankind in the World; and so he does likewise the Enjoyment of such other Things, as the Condition of the present Life makes desirable to us: But then it is constantly with this Reserve; that the Reasoning Faculty preserve its own Liberty, so as not to be enslaved to the Body, or any of its sensual Inclinations, but be constantly raising itself up above these, and aspiring to the Enjoyment of its own proper Happiness. So that of all Outward Things which are commonly esteemed good, those that can any way conduce to the promoting our real Happiness, we may take the Advantage of; provided it be done with due Temper, and Moderation. But, as for such as are wholly inconsistent with that True Good, we are absolutely forbidden the having any thing at all to do with them.

One very remarkable Excellency these Writings have, That they render all, who govern themselves by them, truly happy in present, and do not content themselves with turning Men over to a long Payment, by distant Promises of their Vertues being rewarded in a Future State. Not but that there most certainly shall be such a State. and such Rewards. For it is impossible, that that Being, which serves itself of the Body, and of its Appetites and Affections, as so many Instruments to act by, should not have a distinct Nature

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past Offences to be punished by several sorts of Tortures after Death; but these to be in the Nature of Corrections as well as Punishments. From them the Doctrine of Purgatory seems to have been derived; and indeed many other Erroneous Opinions among Christians, were either the Remains or the Improvement of some fond Conceits and odd Expressions among the old Philosophers. This is plain in the *Gnostick* and *Valentinian* Heresies particularly.

of its own; a Nature, that continues entire, after these are lost and destroyed; and consequently, it must needs have a Perfection of its own too, peculiar and agreeable to its Essence and Nature. Now, though we should suppose the Soul to be mortal, and that It and the Body perish both together; yet he that lives according to these Directions, will be sure to find his Account in them; for he cannot fail of being a truly happy Man, because he attains to the Perfection of his Nature, and the Enjoyment of that Good, which is accommodated to a Rational Soul. And thus the Body of a Man, which is confessedly mortal, enjoys its own proper Happiness, and can ask nothing farther, when it attains to all that Vigor and Perfection, that the Nature of a Body is capable of.

The Discourses themselves are short and sententious; much after the manner of those Precepts which the *Pythagoreans* call their *Memorandums* or *Moral Institutions*: Though among these indeed, there is some sort of Method and Connexion, and a mutual Relation almost all through; as will appear hereafter, when we come to consider them particularly. And these Observations and Maxims, though they be put into distinct Chapters, are yet all upon one Subject, and belong to the same Science; viz. *That of Amending the Life of Man*. They are all directed to one and the same End; which is, To rouse and invigorate the Reasonable Soul, that it may maintain its own Dignity, and exert all its Powers in such Operations as are agreeable to uncorrupt Nature.

The Expressions are perspicuous and easie; but yet it may not be amiss, a little to explain and enlarge upon them; and that, as well for the Writer's own sake, who by this means will be more sensibly affected, and carried to a closer and deeper Consideration of the Truths contained in them; as for the Reader's Benefit, who, perhaps, not being very conversant in such kind of Writings, will be led into a more perfect Understanding of them by these Explanations.

Now

Now the first Thing to be cleared upon this Occasion is, What sort of Persons these Instructions were designed for; and what Vertues especially they are capable of cultivating in the Men that submit to be directed by them.

And first, it is plain they are not proper for the Man of consummate Vertue, who hath absolutely purged away all the Dregs of Humane Nature: for he (so far as his mortal State will admit of such Perfection) makes it his Business to divest himself of Flesh and Sense, and all the Appetites and Passions that attend and serve the Body; and is entirely taken up with the Improvement of his own Mind. Much less can they suite the Circumstances of a speculative Vertue, which is a Degree still higher than the former. For such a Person is exalted even above the Rational Life, and attains to a sort of God-like Contemplation. They are adapted then more peculiarly to an inferiour Rank, who lead their Lives according to the Dictates of Reason, and look upon the Body, as an Instrument of Action, contrived for the Use of the Soul: Men that do not confound these two, nor make either a part of the other; nor the Body and Soul both, as equally constituent parts of Humane Nature. For he that supposes the Man, strictly speaking, to consist of Body as well as Soul, hath a Vulgar Notion of Things; is deprest and sunk down into Matter; hath no more Pretensions to Reason, than a Brute; and scarce deserves the Name of Man. He that would answer that Character in good earnest, and assert the Dignity and Prerogative of his Nature, by which God hath distinguished him from Beasts, must take care to preserve his Soul, as Nature requires it should be, in a State of Superiority over the Body; so as to use and manage it, not as a part of the same common Nature, but as an Instrument wholly at its Government and Disposal. And such a Person as this is the proper Object of those Moral and Political Vertues, which the following Discourses are intended to excite Men to. B 3 That



That the Real Essence of a Man is his Rational Soul, *Socrates* hath undertaken to demonstrate, in that Dialogue which *Plato* gives us, between him and his beloved *Alcibiades*. And *Epicetus*, proceeding upon this Foundation, directs his Scholars, what sort of Practices and Conversation are proper to make a Man, thus framed by Nature, perfect. For as the Body gathers Strength by Exercise, and frequently repeating such Motions as are natural to it; so the Soul too, by exerting its Powers, and the Practice of such things as are agreeable to Nature, confirms itself in Habits, and strengthens its own natural Constitution.

I would not have the Reader take it ill to be detained a little longer from the following Discourses, only whilst I present him with so necessary an Introduction to them, as the explaining a little this Notion, which *Epicetus* all along takes for a granted Truth, viz. *That the Real Essence of the Man is his Rational Soul, which makes use of the Body as its Instrument of Action*. For *Epicetus* sets before us the Operations peculiar to such a Person, and becoming his Character; and then he makes it his Business to excite all his Scholars to get a perfect Knowledge, and employ themselves in the constant Practice of them: That by such daily Exercise we may, as I said, give the finishing Stroke to Nature, and be as perfect, as our Condition is capable of being. This is the Ground *Epicetus* goes upon, which he does not at all attempt to prove, but takes it, as I said, for a Fundamental Truth, sufficiently plain, and acknowledged before.

But the Method, in which *Socrates* proceeds, is this: He makes use of clear and familiar Examples, and tells us, That a Man in Cutting (for instance) uses his Knife, and he uses his Hand too: Then, inferring from hence, that the Thing used, considered as an Instrument, is different from that which employs it; he concludes, that it is the Man which employs the Body as an Instrument. Now in truth, it is the Rational Soul,  
and

and nothing else, that employs this Body, in the Exercise of Arts and Trades, and all manner of Operations. From hence again he draws this farther Inference, That that which employs the Body, hath the Government and Disposal of what it so employs. And then he forms his Argument into this Disjunctive Syllogism, Either the Soul alone, or the Body alone, or both together, must needs be the Man. Now if the Man have the command of the Body, and the Body cannot command nor dispose of itself; then it is evident, that the Body alone cannot be the Man. It is evident again, that Body and Soul together cannot be the Man, for the very same reason; for if the Man have the Government of the Body, and the Body itself have no part of that Government; then it is plain, this prerogative does not extend to Soul and Body both, and therefore both cannot be the Man. But, in short, if the Body in its own Nature be void of all Life and Motion, and if it be the Soul, which animates and moves it, (as we see in Handicraft Trades, the Workman is the Principle of Motion, and the Tools have none, but what they derive from him,) then it follows, that the Body is to the Soul, what a Tool is to the Artificer: And consequently, that the Soul being the Original of all Operation, is truly and properly the Man.

So then, whoever would make the Man his Care, must consult the advantage and improvement of the Soul, and pursue the Happiness peculiar to this: For he that bestows his pains upon the Body, does not (it seems) advance himself, and his own Good, (properly speaking) but only that of his Instrument. Much more extravagant and absurd is it then, to lay himself out upon Riches, or any External Advantages of that kind; because, in so doing, he pursues a very Foreign Interest, one much more distant than the former: For he neither makes the Man, nor the Man's Instrument, the Object of his Care; but all terminates in those things, which make for the Convenience of this Instrument only.

*Epicætet. Enchiridion.*

## CHAP. I.

*All things whatsoever may be divided into Two Sorts; those that are, and those that are not, within our own Power: Of the former sort are our Opinions and Notions of Things; \* Our Affections, our Desires, and our Aversions. And in short, all our Actions of every kind are in our own power.*

## C O M M E N T.

**H**E calls those Things *in our own power*, which we our selves are Masters of, and which depend purely upon our own Disposal and Choice; as we commonly say, any thing is a Man's own, which he is not beholden to any body else for, so as that it should fall within the compass of a Second Person, to grant or deny it, to permit or debar, or any way hinder him in, the Enjoyment of it. Now such are the Motions and Operations of the Soul; They are born and bred within us, and owing solely to our own Judgment, and our own Choice; for indeed, it is not possible for any thing

\* *Affections.*] This is the most convenient Rendering I could think of, for the Greek *ὁμαί*; which though the Latin *Impetus* may do right to, yet I question whether any English Word will fully express it: If any, this of *Affection*, which yet I do not so nicely confine my self to in this Translation, as not to render it by Paraphrase in some Places. But I must own, that in the midst of my Doubts, what to express it by generally, the Authority of our Learned *Caſaub.* in his *Latin*, and of *Meric Caſaub.* in his *English* Translation of *Antoninus*, very much prevailed with me, who have both chosen this Expression for it in that Passage, which seems very pertinent and directing to this purpose. *Lib. III. Sect. XVI. ὁμαί, ὁμαί. Νῆς. ὁμαί & αἰσθήεις, ὁμαί, ὁμαί, ὁμαί.*  
*Caſ. Affectus; Caſaub. Affections.*

without

without us to determine our Choice: The *Object* of our Choice, 'tis confess'd, is very often something without us; but the *Act* of it, and the Motions toward it, are entirely our own, and within us. Such, for instance, are the particular Opinions we entertain, and the Judgments we make of Things; as, that Riches, or Death, or the like, are things in their own Nature, Good, or Evil, or Indifferent: And, though we are often induced, to take up this or that particular Opinion upon Trust, and upon the Credit we give to what we hear other People say of it; yet is not their Authority, or their Persuasion, of such absolute efficacy, as that the Opinion should not still be our own. For at this rate, we should make our selves as senseless Creatures as Parrots, who when they call for a Cup of Sack, know not what they say. If we be allowed then to think at all, the Opinion must be our own Act and Deed; occasion'd, 'tis true, sometimes by things without us, and recommended and conveyed to us by the Instructions and Arguments of others; but not infused so Mechanically, as that we should be purely passive in the case.

Thus again; The *Object*, that moves our Affection, is without us, but the Affection itself is excited, and arises, within us. For there is a great difference observable, between the Internal Motion of the Mind, and the External Motive or Inducement to it. This Motion is not like that of Men thrust forward by another, forcibly and against their Wills, but such a one, as when we move our own Bodies, by our own Strength, and of our own Accord.

The Case is the same with our Desires; by which the Soul does (as it were) put her self forward, and go in pursuit of the thing desired; and so likewise with our Aversions too, which are but a kind of turning aside, or running away, to avoid the *Object* that provokes them.

Now it is sufficiently manifest, that of all these, the First in order of Nature must be Opinion; by which

I understand such a Knowledge or Judgment of things, as is grounded upon Reason, and worthy the Character of a Man. When this Opinion relates to any real or seeming Good or Evil, which we apprehend our selves to be concern'd in, then it presently excites either Desire or Aversion; and, pursuant to either of these, the proper Affections or Motions of the Soul. For the Good must needs be desired, before the Soul be affected with it, or move towards it; and the Evil must be disapproved, before she flee from it. Though indeed the Stoicks have advanced a contrary Method, and represented the Affections, by which the Soul is carried to or from its Object, as if they were antecedent to Desire and Aversion; thus considering these Affections, as the beginnings and immediate Causes of those Desires and Aversions in the Soul.

But after all, the Brutish Inclinations, such particularly as Anger and Sensual Appetite, are so much of a piece with the Body, so closely and manifestly interwoven with the Blood and Animal Spirits, that they seem to grow from the particular Complexions and Constitutions of Men. So that these must of necessity derive their Motion from an External Cause in great measure, and cannot be perfectly at their own disposal, nor under the absolute mastery of the Persons thus desiring, &c. though they are begun too, and proceed Originally, from within. And not only so, but the Rational Soul itself, when subdued by the Body, and the brutish impulses of Sense, does in a great degree degenerate into *Machine*, is violently agitated, drawn and managed at pleasure, and loses much of its native liberty and power. But when it acts in agreement with Nature and Reason, it maintains an absolute freedom, and moves only by an Internal Principle of its own. In a Mind thus regularly disposed, it is very easie to discern how much we have in our own Power; though in the former instance of a disorderly Mind, the case be somewhat intricate and perplexed. But however,

in order to a more exact understanding of the whole Matter, both what this Liberty and Power is, and what Objects it extends to; as also, to shew, that all the Happiness and Misery of a Man's Life, depends upon the use or the abuse of this Liberty; I will trace the thing up to its first Cause, and examine the whole matter particularly.

The Source and Original of all things is Good; for indeed, that must needs be both the Cause, and Beginning, and the End and Consummate Perfection of all, in which all Desires Centre, and to which all things naturally tend. Now this Good forms and produces all things out of its own fulness, both the most excellent, the middle sort, and the last and lowest rank of Beings. The First and most excellent, bear the closest affinity to itself, are of a piece with it, (as it were) and express Images of it. Thus one Good Being produces many Good Beings; one simple and uncompounded Being, Independent and Supreme, produces many other simple Beings like itself; one Principle produces many Principles: And this One, this Simple Being, this Principle, and this Good, are but so many several Names for God, who is before all things, and the cause of all things.

Now whatever is First, must of necessity be the Purest and most simple Being; for all compounded Things and Numbers, are after the Simple, and Unites, in order of Nature, and inferior to them in Dignity. And all Compounds, and Things not Good, do desire the Good, as something above, and better than, themselves. And whatever is not self-existent, must have received its Being from something else. So that the First Principle, and Original Cause, must have all Absolute and Infinite Power; the Excellence of which consists, and its Exuberance is seen, in the Production of all things from itself, and in giving to those that resemble its own Perfections, the Precedence before others, that bear no such Resemblance to it. And hence it is, that One  
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common Principle produces many Principles, many Simple Beings, many Goodnesses, immediately from itself, and its own fulness.

Thus all Beings, which are distinguished from one another, by their own peculiar Differences, and multiplied into several Species, according to the particular Forms and Circumstances in which they differ, are yet each of them reducible to One Principle, more properly their own. All things Beautiful and Lovely (for instance) of what kind soever that Loveliness and Beauty be, or what Object soever it belong to, whether Bodies or Souls, are yet derived from one common Source of Beauty and Gracefulness.

The case is the same with all manner of Congruities, and all Truths, and all Principles; for these, so far forth as they are Principles and Originals to other things, do exactly agree; and are of the same Nature with that primary Goodness, and original Truth, and first Principle of all; Allowing only for some Abatements, and taking that Agreement in such Proportions, as the capacity of these derived and secondary Causes will admit. For the same relation, which that first Universal Principle bears to all Beings in general, the same does each of these Subordinate Principles bear to the several Species and Individuals contained under it, and partaking of the Property peculiar to it. For every Species, which is distinguished from the rest by a peculiar difference of its own, must needs have a tendency to, and terminate in, its proper Principle, from whence one and the same Form is reflected down upon all the particular Kinds and Creatures comprehended under it.

Thus an Unit is the Foundation of all Numbers, and a single Cause is the Original of all Properties, in this vast Variety of Beings. So that all partial and subordinate Causes do really subsist, and are contained, in the first and universal one; and this, not locally or numerically, but essentially and virtually; as the Parts

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in the Whole, as Generals in a Singular, and as Numbers in an Unit. For this indeed is itself All, Above and Before All; and out of One Principle many Principles grow, and in One Common Good many Goodnesses subsist and dwell.

Nor is this Principle a limited or particular one (as for instance, a Principle of Beauty, or Gracefulness, or Goodness, or Truth) as each of the rest are; but simply and universally a Principle or Cause; a Principle not only of Species and Beings, but even of all other Principles too. For, the Property of a Principle cannot take its Rise from Particulars, and from Many, but must center at last in an Unit; and that One is the great Original of All, the first Beginning, and Cause of Causes.

Now the first and immediate Productions of this first Original Good, are of the same Kind and Nature with itself. They retain their Native Goodness, and, like that from whence they spring, are fixed and unchangeable, rooted and confirmed in the same Happiness; they stand in need of no additional Good from abroad, but are themselves naturally and essentially Good and Happy. Now all other Beings, whose Descent from that One original Good is more remote, and who derive themselves from that First, and these Secondary Causes in Conjunction, lose that Perfection of being Essentially Good, and enjoy what they have by participation only. Fixed indeed they are in God's Essential Goodness, and therefore he continually communicates it to them. But the last and lowest sort which have no power of acting or moving themselves, (as Bodies for Example) As their Existence, and Motion, is something from without, and what themselves are purely passive in; so likewise is all their Good owing to something without them too. And, that their Motion and Existence is from without, is plain, because they have no discerning or governing Faculty; they are subject to perpetual change and division, and consequently



frequently cannot be present to themselves in every part, so as to be all in all, or produce themselves entire at once: Nor have they any power of moving themselves, as being in their own Nature void of Spirit and Life. But now there is a middle state between these Extremes, a sort of Beings inferior to that fixed immutable nature which is always consistent with itself, and yet superior to the Lowest and Mechanical sort. And these are moved, yet not in the same manner with Bodies, by a Motion impressed upon them from something else, but by one internal and purely theirs. And in this capacity are Souls, Masters of their own, and the Body's motion to which they are united. For which reason, we call all those Bodies, that are set into motion by a principle from within, *Animate*; and those that have none, but what proceed from something without, *Inanimate* Bodies.

So then the Soul gives motion both to itself, and to the Body; for if it received its own motion from something without, and after that put the Body into motion, this motion of the Body could not, with any propriety of Speech, be imputed to the Soul, but would be wholly owing to that which first moved the Soul. Now this free Being is beneath the fix'd and unchangeable Goodness, and enjoys its Good by participation only, and so is carried towards it; but this is done by no Foreign Force, but by its own Spontaneous Act, its own Inclinations and Desires. For Inclinations, and Desires, and Affections, and Choice, are Motions proper to Souls, and entirely their own.

Now of these, the First and Best, being the immediate production of things Essentially and in their own nature good, though with this abatement, that they are not so themselves, but only are desirous of Good: yet they bear so near a Relation to them, that they desire it with a natural and unchangeable Affection; their Choice is ever uniform and consistent, determined to the good part, and never perverted to the worse. And

if by Choice we mean the preferring of one thing before another, they can scarce be allowed to have any, unless you will call it so, because they ever take the chiefest and most perfect Good. But the Souls of Men are so contrived, as to link together, into one Person, a Heavenly and an Earthly Nature, and consequently must be capable of inclining to both sides, of soaring upwards, or sinking downwards. When they make the former their constant care, their Desires and their Determinations are uniform and free, and above Contradiction; but when they lose this power, all is inverted and out of course, because they employ themselves wholly upon pursuing mean ends, and only affect low Actions; whereas Nature hath qualified them for the animating and moving of Bodies inanimate and purely passive, and for governing those things, which are incapable of procuring or partaking of any Good by their own Act; and hath given them a power, not only of acting as they please themselves, but of putting other things into action at pleasure too, which otherwise are not capable of any such thing.

Now, when the Soul hath conversed too familiarly, and addicted herself too much to Temporal and Corruptible things, such as have but a perishing and transitory Good in them; her Choice is no longer above Contradiction, but attended with many Struggles and strong Oppositions; 'tis directed still indeed to Objects eligible and good; but then this is sometimes a real Good, and sometimes a treacherous and deceitful one, which upon the account of some Pleasure attending it, prevails upon us. And because this is most certain, that true good is always attended with true Pleasure, hence it is, that, wherever the Soul discovers the least shadow of this, she catches at it greedily, without staying to consider of what kind the Pleasure is; whether real and agreeable to that Good which is truly so, or whether it be false, and only carries a counterfeit face of Good; never recollecting neither, that it is necessarily attended

attended with many Troubles, and great Uneasinesses, and would not be Pleasure, without these to introduce and recommend it to us. For he that takes pleasure in eating, would have none, if he had not first been Hungry; nor would Drinking give a Man any, but for the Thirst that afflicted him before. Thus Uneasiness and Pain are the constant Attendants of Pleasure, and ever mingled with it: So that if you suppose any Pleasure in Drinking, you shall find, that it comes from some remains of Thirst; for the Pleasure lasts no longer, than while the pain continues with it. So long as we are Hungry, or Dry, or Cold, or the like, the Meat, and Drink, and Fire, that allay these uneasinesses, are agreeable to us; but when once the Sense of those Pains ceases, we quickly grow weary, and have too much of them: And what before gave satisfaction and relief, soon becomes our loathing and aversion, and is itself a pain to us. Thus also the Men, who suffer themselves to be carried away into inordinate and extravagant Enjoyments, and make Pleasure the only End and Business of their Lives, generally undergo a great deal of trouble and uneasiness along with it.

Now the choice of this pleasant treacherous Good is the cause of all our Faults; as, on the contrary, the Choice of true substantial Good is the Foundation of all our Vertues. And indeed all the Good and Evil of our whole Lives, the Happiness and Misery of them, depend upon this freedom of Will, and Power of Choice in us. For when the Will is disengaged, when it proceeds from a free principle, and its determinations are properly the acts of that Rational Soul, of which our very Essence and Nature consists, then it is directed to Objects truly Eligible and Good. And for this reason, Vertue, which is its proper Happiness and Perfection is called in Greek, \* *Αρετή*, &c. A

\* *Αρετή*. Name which hath great affinity to a Word that signifies *Eligible*, not only because Vertue is properly the Object, but also, because it is the effect

effect of our own Choice. But when the Will acts in compliance with the brutish Appetites and Inclinations, and proposes their Enjoyments to it self as its own Happiness; then it makes an ill Choice, and fixes upon counterfeit Good instead of true: So that all this Freedom and Choice is in our own disposal. For the Opinions and Affections of the Soul, its Inclinations and Aversions, are but so many Steps towards Choice; and all terminate in that at last: and these are properly the motions of the Mind arising from within, and not from any violent impulses from without us. So that we our selves are Masters of all these things.

This is the very Reason, why the Laws of God and Man, and the Judgment of all Wise Men, make our own Freedom and Choice, the Standard to measure our Actions by. They look upon the Intention, as a thing absolutely in our own power, and pronounce of our Vices and our Vertues, according to this, and not according to the quality of our Actions themselves. For they are not absolutely ours, but are specified and distinguished, become formally good or evil, by our own Will, and our own Choice. The action of Killing, is always the same, considered strictly in it self; but when this action is involuntary, it is excused and pardoned, because in such cases it is not properly ours, nor in our own power: Nay, when done in a just Cause, or in a legal way, it is not only excused, but applauded and highly commendable. So that the formal Good or Evil of our Actions, does not depend upon the Actions themselves, but upon the Intention, the Choice, the Freedom and Power, which we have in them, and which give them their moral Qualities accordingly.

By all this it appears, that *Epictetus* took the right Method, when he began his Instructions with this consideration of things within our own power; and advised us to make it the general rule of all our Conduct;

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duct; since all the Excellency, and all the Dishonesty of our Actions, all the Happiness and all the Misery of our Lives, depends upon it. But, when he says in general Terms, *That all things may be distinguished into Two sorts, some that are, and some that are not in our own power*; we must not so understand him, as if all things whatsoever were meant by it, but only such as are within us, or any way concern us. For at that rate, there would be no proportion at all betwixt the Two opposite Parts, which ought to be observed, and is necessary to make a just Division. And this Proportion, I say, would be quite lost, if all things whatsoever, both those that are contained in the World, and those that are above, and out of the World, were set in opposition to the few in comparison, that are within our own power.

But now, in regard some People quarrel with this Distinction, even when limited in the most cautious manner that can be, and will allow us to have nothing at all in our power: And among these, Some assert, that all our Actions, Appetites, and Passions, proceed from Necessity, and not from Choice; and Others make us like Stones put into motion, that act mechanically, by chance, and without any purpose or design at all; tho' what hath been said already, upon our natural Power, and the Place which our Choice and Free-Will hath, and the Necessity that so it must be, might suffice; yet perhaps it may not be amiss to consider the Objections of those Men, who would rob us of this Liberty and Power, and to refute them particularly.

Now, if by this mechanical and forced sort of Action, without purpose, and by pure chance, they intend to say, that we propose to our selves no end at all in what we do, it is by no means true; or if it would hold in some cases, yet it is evident, there are very many instances, in which it will not. For all

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Arts and Sciences, nay, all Natures and Beings, have constantly some particular aim and end fixed to them; to which they direct their Endeavours perpetually, make every action in some degree subservient. And it may be said in general, That there is no one Act, no one Motion, of any Living Creature in the whole World, but is performed out of a prospect of some real, or at least some seeming Good: Even where the Object is Evil, this Observation holds; for the avoiding that Evil is for the attaining some Good, and for the advantage we may find escaping from it.

But if this acting by Chance, and without any Purpose, be so understood, that what we desire, may prove impossible to be compassed, or incapable of answering our end, or hurtful when we have attained it, (as we say sometimes that a Man took a Medicine without any thought, or to no purpose, which did him no good, or perhaps did him harm:) Neither does this Sense destroy our Free Will. For we maintain, that those Desires and Aversions, are in our Power, which concern not only things that may be attained, and turn to our Benefit when they are so; but those too which cannot, and which are prejudicial to us when we have them. And for this Reason we affirm, that our Errors and our Vices, are as truly the effects of this Liberty and Choice, as our greatest Vertues themselves are.

Those who pretend, that our Opinions and Desires, and generally speaking, all our Choices and Intentions, are necessary, and not at our own Disposal, as proceeding from Motives without us, and not beginning of our own accord within us, argue for their Opinion several ways.

Some of them make the Wants of Humane Nature, the ground of this Necessary; for we all know, that a Man in extremity of Hunger, or Thirst, or Cold, desires Meat, and Drink, and

Warmth, whether he will or no; and a Person upon a Sick Bed cannot help desiring Health and Ease.

Some lay all upon the nature of the thing it self, which is the Object of our Opinion, or Desire, or Aversion; and contend, that this excites our Passions, and affects our Minds, by its own Power and Evidence, whether we are consenting to it, or not. Who is there, for instance, that hath attained to the least knowledge in Arithmetick, and does not readily allow, and firmly believe, *that twice Two make Four?* And which way shall we call such an Opinion as this, the effect of Freedom and Choice, and not rather of absolute Constraint, because arising from the evidence of the thing assented to, and the impossibility of its being otherwise? So again, when a Man hath entertain'd a Notion of any Goodness or Excellence, when he apprehends a thing to be Lovely, or Profitable, or the direct contrary; does he not forthwith naturally desire the one sort, and decline the other? For the best Philosophers are agreed, that the Object of our Desire, and the Final cause, are the first Motives, and that which sets all the rest on work: and if this be true, how shall we challenge that as our own Act and Deed, which is so absolutely the effect of Constraint and Necessity, imposed by the nature and quality of things without us, that stir our Affections accordingly, without any Disposal or Consent of ours?

Others rather think, that the Disposition of the Person designing is the cause of all this necessity; for this, say they, must needs be wrought upon, according as it stands inclined; Nor is it in ones own Choice, whether he will desire those things or not, which his own Nature, and Temper, and Custom, strongly determine him to. Thus the Temperate Person finds in himself an habitual desire of such Actions, and such Conversation, as are agreeable to the Vertue of Temperance; and the Intemperate is



no less fond of all occasions to exercise his Extravagance. Thus the Designs of them both are fixed, and it is not in their power to alter them. For some we see plainly, who are angry at themselves, condemn their own Desires, and wish with all their Souls, that they could restrain and subdue them, yet find their Habits and Customs so violent and prevailing, that they are hurried on, and thrust forward, like so many Engines, and feel and lament the force which they cannot resist, when Objects which are agreeable to their Inclinations, such as by custom are become familiar and natural to them, offer themselves. By the same reason, a Skilful and Judicious Man, will give a right Judgment of things, and entertain true Opinions of them; and the Ignorant and Unlearned, will have false and mistaken Notions. For it cannot agree with the Character of a Wise Man, to take up with an Error; nor with that of an Ignorant one, to find out the Truth: But it stands to great Reason, that the Ignorant one should assent to a Falshood, and the Skilful and Learned should reject it. And yet, if these things were entirely at ones own disposal, this would not be. For the Ignorant Man would never prefer Falshood before Truth, if he could help it; and the Wise Man, if we should allow him to assent to Truth, meerly by virtue of his own Free will, might also be allowed to take up false Opinions, if you do but suppose his Will to incline him that way too. But this, they tell you, cannot be, for it is with the Understanding, and the Objects about which it is employed, as we find it with the Senses of the Body, and sensible Objects; where it is impossible to have things apprehended otherwile than they represent themselves, unless we suppose some weakness or defect in the Organs, which should apprehend and represent them to us.

These are the Cavils commonly made use of against Free-will, though indeed a great many Men



insist upon one more, and fancy, that there is a Fatality in the Motion and Position of the Heavens, which influences, not only all other things, but even our very Desires and Inclinations too, determines us in the Opinions we shall espouse, and the Choices we shall make. And in confirmation of this Argument, they produce the Predictions of Astrologers, who, upon calculating Men's Nativity, and finding what Planet each Person is born under, take upon them to pronounce very peremptorily, that such a one shall be a Voluptuous Person, a Second, Covetous, a Third, a Lover of Learning and Wisdom; and thus declare beforehand, the Inclinations and Desires, which in the whole course of their Lives shall afterwards be discovered by their Behaviour and Conversation: Now these Men could never say true, nor describe such Tempers and Practices so exactly as they do, if there were not some Constellation, some fatal over-ruling Influence, that enforces these particular Inclinations and Appetites, and puts it past Men's power to change or conquer them. And if any such Fatality there be, how absurd is it to pretend to a power of regulating and determining our own Desires, and fixing them upon what Objects we please, when we are absolutely and irrevocably staked down to this or that particular Object beforehand, and must desire and pursue it, whether we will or no? This I think, is the Sum of all those Objections, that use to be urged against that Liberty we profess to assert, and the power of disposing our Desires and our Aversions, the Resolutions we take, and the Actions we do, as we see fit our selves.

Now in answer to the First of these, which made our Wants the Foundation of that Necessity and Constraint they pretend; we may reply, that, if this were true, then Want would always create Desire: But this it does not do. For there are many things, and particularly Inanimate Creatures, that are often  
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times in great want of some Quality or other; Heat, or Cold, or Drought, or Moisture, and yet they never desire what they stand so much in need of; and the reason is plain, because their Nature is not capable of Desire: For, in order to Desiring, it is necessary both to have a Sense of the thing desired, and to be moved by that Sense: from whence it is plain, that Want does not always infuse, nor infer Desire.

But the Creatures which are endued with a faculty of desiring, when they feel themselves in want, do then exert Desire, in order to the Relief of the Wants they feel.

Thus (to illustrate the Thing by a familiar Instance) Itching disposes us to Scratch, and upon a Sense of the Uneasiness it gives us, the Hands apply themselves to the Relief we want, but yet this Itching does not give us the Hands we scratch with: Nor is it true, that the Necessities of Humane Life have invented the Arts and Trades that are made use of for the Support of it; for it is the Mind of Man, which invented them, saw the Need there was of them, and took Occasion from thence to seek out this Relief. For all Desire is a Motion of the Soul desiring, born and begun within, and exerted by the Soul, when called out by any desirable Object; but it is by no means infused into the Soul from without. Now the Irrational Life of Brute Beasts, being wholly corporeal, and having, in truth, little or nothing but what is Matter and Body belonging to it, is troubled with no difference or distraction of Desires, hath no Wants, except those relating to the Body, to supply; and consequently, but one sort of Desires to exert. And this constant Uniformity in their case, makes us think them the Effect, not of Liberty, but Necessity.

But now, the rational Soul of Man, being placed, as I said before, in a middle Station, may be confi-

dered in a threefold Capacity and Diſpoſition; One, that inclines it to the worſt part, that is, the Bodily and Brutish; a Second, that regards its own ſelf; and a Third, that better and more excellent part above it: ſo that here may be a threefold Converſation, a threefold Want, and a threefold Deſire. Now when it gives it ſelf tamely up to the Body, and conſults the Brutish Appetites and Wants of that part only, then, of neceſſity, it complies and concurs with all the Bodily Deſires. And this is that ſort of Deſire, which captivates the Will, and hath brought the Freedom of it to be a Matter of ſo much Controverſie. But when it purſues the Inclinations, and lives agreeably to the Nature, either of its own ſelf, or the excellent Beings above it, then it exerts its Faculties freely, and deſires the Good peculiar to theſe Conditions, without Difficulty or Oppoſition. Now the Power and Liberty of the Soul conſiſts in this; that, whereas Nature hath made her capable of Deſires of ſeveral Qualities, ſome of a better and more excellent kind, and others of a worſe and more vile, ſhe can ſo far diſpoſe of her ſelf, as to fix upon either the one or the other of theſe ſorts; which yet is done with this Difference, that by purſuing the worſe her Faculties are enfeebled and debaſed, and by following the better they are exalted and confirmed; for the Choice of theſe is indeed truly and properly Choice. And hence we ſee it often happens, that when the Body finds it ſelf low and empty, and requires Meat, or ſome other Suſtenance, the Mind ſteps in and countermands this Deſire with another over-ruling one of Faſting or Abſtemiouſneſs; and this too taken up poſſibly upon ſome Religious Account, or in Obedience to ſome Law, or perhaps, merely in point of Prudence, as thinking it better upon its own Account, or more conducing to the Health of the Body. Now I think no body can ſay, but the Mind, in ſuch a Caſe, might, if it had

had so pleased, have complied with those first Desires, as indeed we find the Generality of People do upon these Occasions; but you see it exerted another opposite Desire, and prosecuted that as the greater Good, and so more eligible of the two: So that *Epictetus*, looking upon the Soul as endued with Reason, might upon this Account very justly say, that she had it in her Power to qualifie her Desires, and to place them upon such or such Objects, as she saw Cause.

The next Objection, that tells us, The Object of Desire necessarily excites the Soul to a Desire of it, must be acknowledg'd to have a great deal of Truth in it, but yet not so much as the Persons who urge it imagine: For, the Object does not move the Soul to Desire forcibly and mechanically, but by proposing itself, as something fit to be embraced, and thus calling forth those Powers of the Soul into Action, which Nature hath qualified to meet and to receive it. Just as the sensible Object does not infuse the Faculty of Sensation into the Person who receives its Impressions, nor draws him by violence to itself; but only presents itself to the Eye, in such Proportions as are proper for uniting with that Organ of Sense, which was ordained by Nature, and fitted for that Union. And so the Object of Desire presents its Convenience and Fitness to the Soul, and this invites such Motions, as Nature hath provided proper for this Purpose. Thus it must needs be, because we see, that, when desirable Objects offer themselves, some People are, and others are not, affected with them; whereas, if the Object were endued with such Efficacy and Power, as perfectly to constrain the Person desiring, and the Motion of the Mind were necessarily impressed by it, it must needs follow, that upon such Occasions every one must be affected with it, though perhaps not every one in the same Degree. And, in truth, such an Operation upon the Mind, would not be Desire, but

a violent Impulse, or forcible Attraction, such as we see when one Body is thrust forward, or dragged along by another. For Desire is a kind of Expansion in the Mind, a moving forwards toward the Thing desired, without any local Motion in the Person desiring; such as we may resemble to a Man's stretching out his Hands to meet or embrace one, while the rest of his Body is in no Motion: So that Desire is a Motion begun originally, and proceeding from within; as are also our Opinions, and the other Things mentioned here by *Epictetus*.

This Motion, indeed, is sometimes what it ought to be, and is duly proportioned to the Nature of the Thing which we desire or conceive of: And sometimes it is mistaken and very different from it, when we are inclined to something, which to us appears very desirable, but is really what should rather provoke our Aversion. When it shews us a gaudy Out-side to invite our Desire, and hath a great deal of hidden Evil within, which all the while lies concealed, under some Advantage, which the Idea of this Object flatters us with. Thus the Thief is carried away with an Idea of Gain and Riches, as a desirable Thing; and this keeps him from considering, or having any dread at all, of that horrible Evil, which lies sheltered under this Gain, that defiles his Soul, and taints it with Injustice. And then, as for any Apprehensions of Discovery, and Imprisonment, and Punishment, which are the only Calamities so wicked a Wretch fears; The excessive Eagerness of his Desire utterly overlooks and stifles all these; for he presently represents to himself, what a World of Men do such Things, and yet are never found out. Now thus much is plainly in our Power, to examine this Object of our Desire more nicely; and to inform our selves well, whether it be a real Good and worth our pursuing; or whether it only cheat us with a fair Out-side and counterfeited Appearance of Good; as, particularly, in the Instance  
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of Gain just now mentioned. Nay, we may go something farther yet ; for, we may correct and regulate our Desires, may bring them to fix upon such Objects only as are truly desirable, and teach them not to be imposed upon with false Appearances.

We are told again, That our Desires and our Opinions are carried to their proper Object with as invincible a Necessity, as a Stone or Clod of Earth is carried downwards ; and consequently, that Nature hath left us nothing in our own Power : Nor have we any more reason to conclude, that we are free to think, or to desire, after this or that manner, when we see our Assent and Appetite always moved by the Credibility or the Desirableness of their Objects, than we have to suppose that a Stone can ascend, when we never see it do so.

Now to this it may be replied, that there is a twofold Necessity, the one absolutely destructive of Free-Will, the other very consistent with it. That kind of Necessity which proceeds from any Things without us, does indeed take away all Liberty and Choice ; for no Man can be said to act freely, when he is compelled by any other external Cause, to do a Thing, or to leave it undone. But then there is another sort of Necessity from within our selves, which keeps every thing within its due Bounds, and obliges each Faculty and Part to act agreeably to its own Nature and original Constitution. And this is so far from destroying Free-Will, that it rather preserves and supports it. For by this means it comes to pass, that a Free-Agent can be wrought upon by no other ways, but such as are consistent with the Nature of a Free-Agent, which is, from a Principle of Motion within itself. And this Necessity is by no means a Mechanical Necessity, because it is not imposed by any thing from without us ; but is what the Nature of such an Agent admits and requires ; what is necessary for its Preservation, and for exerting the Operations proper to a Creature endued with such a Faculty as Self-Motion. Be-

Besides, if the Soul can bring itself to such Habits and Dispositions as are Vertuous or Vicious, can grow better by Wisdom and Sobriety, and worse by Perverseness and a Dissolute Behaviour; and can confirm itself in each of these Courses, by the frequent Repetition of Acts suitable to them; then the Soul is the true Cause of all this. Though, in truth, it must not be admitted for a general Rule neither, That the Liberty and Power of the Will is to be judged of by Mens being able to do Things contrary to one another. For those Souls that are immediately united to the Original Good, prefer that constantly, and yet the Freedom of their Choice is still the same; for that Preference is no more constrained and necessary, than if they took Evil instead of it. But it is their Excellence and Perfection, that they continue steadfast in their own Good, and never suffer themselves to be drawn off to the contrary. But as for Our Souls, which are more remotely descended from that great Original, their Desires are according to their Tempers and Dispositions: those of them that are well disposed have good Desires, and those that are ill have evil ones: But still these Souls of ours are capable of great Alterations; They frequently recover themselves from Vice to Vertue, by Reformation and better Care; They decline too, and sink down from Vertue to Vice, by Supineness and a foolish Neglect; and both these Changes are wrought in them by their own voluntary Choice, and not by any Force or Necessity that compels them to it. So that there can be no manner of Pretence for charging any part of our Wickedness upon God. He created the Soul after such a manner indeed, as to leave it capable of being corrupted, because its Essence is not of the first and best sort of Natures, but hath a Mixture of the middle and the lowest; and this Mixture was fit, that so all might remain in its Perfection; and the first and best continue still such, without degenerating into Barrenness.



Barrenness, and Imperfection, and Matter. God therefore, who is infinitely good himself, made the Soul in a Condition that might be perverted; and it is an Argument of his Mercy, and the exceeding Riches of his Goodness, that he did so: For he hath set it above the reach of all external Violence and Necessity, and made it impossible for it to be corrupted without its own Consent.

There is one Argument more still behind; which pretends, That a fatal Revolution of the Heavens hath so strong and absolute a Power upon us, as not only to influence our Actions, but even to determine our Choice and all our Inclinations, and leave us no Liberty at all to dispose of our selves, but only the empty Name of such a Liberty. Now to these we may answer, That if the Rational Soul be Eternal and Immortal, (which I shall not go about to prove, that being forein to this Subject, but desire at present to take for granted, though it must be confest, not in all Points agreeable to the Doctrine of the *Stoicks* in this particular, but) If the Soul, I say, be Eternal and Immortal, it cannot be allowed to receive its Being, or to have its Dependence, upon Matter and Motion. Its Instrument indeed, that is, the Animal taken in the gross, by which I mean, the Body animated by the Soul, may owe its Nature and its Changes to such Causes: For, material Causes produce material Effects, and these may differ, according as those Causes are differently disposed with regard to Things here below. And the Instrument is formed so, as to be proper and serviceable to the Soul, whose Business it is to make use of it now; as the difference of Tools teaches us to distinguish the several Professions that use them, so as to say, These belong to the *Carpenters*, those to the *Masons*, and others to the *Smith's Trade*; and not only to distinguish the Trades themselves, but the Skill and Capacity of the Artificers themselves; to judge of their Designs and Intentions, and the

Perfection



Perfection of the Work itſelf; for, thoſe who are Maſters of their Trade, have better Tools, and uſe them with greater Dexterity, than others: In like manner, they who have attained to the Knowledge of Aſtrology, find out the Nature and Temper of the Inſtrument (the Body) from the different Conſtitution of Material Cauſes, and from hence make their Conjectures of the Diſpoſition of the Soul; and this is the Reaſon why they often gueſs aright. For indeed, the Generality of Souls, when falling under ill Management, and the Converſation of naughty Men, (a ſort of Degradation inflicted upon them by way of Punishment for the loſs of their Primitive Purity) addict themſelves too much to the Body, and are govern'd and ſubdu'd by it; ſo as to uſe it no longer as their Inſtrument of Action, but to look upon it as a part and piece of their own Eſſence, and conform their Deſires to its brutiſh Appetites and Inclinations.

Befides, this Poſition, and fatal Revolution of the Heavens, carries ſome ſort of Agreement to the Production of the Souls united to Bodies under it, yet not ſo, as to impoſe any abſolute Neceſſity upon their Appetites and Inclinations, but only to infer a Reſemblance of their Temper: For, as in Cities there are ſome particular ſolemn Seaſons and Places, that give us good Grounds to diſtinguiſh the Perſons aſſembled in them, as the Days and Places of Publick Worſhip commonly call thoſe that are wiſe, and religious, and well-diſpoſed, together; and thoſe that are ſet apart for Pomp and publick Sports, gather the Rabble, and the Idle, and the Diſſolute; ſo that the obſerving theſe Solemnities gives us a clear Knowledge of the People that attend upon them: By the ſame Reaſon, the particular Seaſons and Places, (the Houſes and Conjunctions of the Planets) may be able to give us ſome Light into the Temper of the Souls united to Bodies under them, as carrying ſome Affinity to the Conjunctions, under which Men are born.

For,

For, when God in his Justice hath ordained such a particular Position, and all the Fatalities consequent to it, then those Souls, which have deserved this Vengeance, are brought under that Position. For Likeness, and Affinity of Tempers, hath a strange Power of bringing all that agree in it together. This fatal Revolution then, does by no means constrain or bind up the Soul, nor take away its native Freedom; but the Soul only bears some Resemblance to the Temper of this Revolution, and is framed agreeably to such a Body, as itself hath deserved to be given it for its Use; and by this means gives Men an Opportunity of learning its particular Desires and Inclinations, by considering the Constellations that People are born under.

Again, the Souls chuse their particular Ways of living, according to their former Dignity and Disposition; but still, the behaving themselves well or ill in each of these Ways, is left in their own Power. And upon this Account, we see many, who have chosen a Way of Trade, and Business, and great Temptation, yet continue very honest and good Men in it; and many that profess Philosophy, and the Improvement of Wisdom and Vertue, are yet of very loose Conversation, notwithstanding all the Advantages of such an Employment. For the different Methods of Life, as that of Husbandry, or Merchandise, or Musick, or the like, are chosen by the Soul, according to her former Disposition; and Mens Station in the World is assigned them suitable to their Dignity and Deserts: But the Management of themselves in any of these Callings is the Choice and Work of the Soul afterwards; and we do not so much blame or commend Men for their Callings themselves, as for their different Behaviour in them.

Farther yet; This fatal Position or Revolution does never (as some Men too boldly affirm it does) cause any thing of Wickedness in us, so as to make it necessary

ceſſary, that Men born under it ſhould be Knaves and Cheats, Adulterous, or addicted to beaſtly and unnatural Luſts. For though the Caſters of Nativities ſometimes ſay true, when they foretel theſe Things; yet this only happens, according as we receive particular Qualities or Impreſſions; which is done ſometimes in a moderate, and ſometimes in an immoderate Degree. And it is not the Influence of the Stars, but the Corruption of the Mind, that makes Men Knaviſh, or Lascivious, or Unnatural and Brutish. Thoſe that receive theſe Influences moderately, and do not aſſiſt them by their own Depravity, are Cautious and Wary, correct the Heats of Youth, and uſe it virtuoſly; but thoſe that receive them immoderately, that is, give way to them, and promote them, debaſe and prostitute themſelves to all manner of Wickedneſs. And what Reflection upon Nature can this be? For even that, which is moſt beneficial to us, may turn to our Prejudice by a perverſe Uſe of it. The Sun gives us Light; it both makes Things viſible, and enables us to ſee them; And yet, if a Man will be ſo fooliſh as to take too much of it, to gaze upon his Rays when they ſhine in their full Strength, he may loſe his Eye ſight by his Folly. But then that Folly, and not the Brightneſs of the Sun, is to be blamed, if that which is the Author of Light to all the World, be the Occaſion of Blindneſs and Darkneſs to him. Now when the Aſtrologers have (as they think) formed to themſelves certain Marks and Rules, whereby to know, who will receive theſe Impreſſions in a due meaſure, and who in a vicious exceſs; then they pronounce ſome Men Wiſe, and others Subtle and Knaviſh accordingly. Though, after all, I very much doubt, Whether the erecting of any Schemes can furniſh them with ſuch Marks of Diſtinction, or no. Some Things indeed are ſo manifeſt, that all the World muſt allow them; as, that when the Sun is in *Cancer*, our

Bodies

Bodies feel excessive Heat; but some again are exceeding dark and doubtful, and such as none but those who have made themselves Masters of Astrology can make any thing of.

Now, that those Things which act constantly according to the Design and Directions of Nature, that preserve the Original Constitution given them at first by their Great Creator, and are endued with the greatest Power and Strength; that such Things, I say, always act upon a good Design, and properly speaking, are never the Cause of any Evil, seems to me very plain: For all Evil is occasioned, not by the Excess, but by the Want of Power; and if it were not so, Power ought not to be reckoned among those Things that are Good: And yet it is as plain, that even Good Things in Excess, oftentimes prove hurtful to us; but then, that Hurt is not owing to the Things, but to our Selves. And thus much may suffice in Answer to them who deny the Freedom of the Will, upon the Pretence of any Fatality from the Motion or Position of the Heavens. †

But indeed, to all who deny this Liberty, upon any Argument whatsoever, it may be replied in ge-

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† If this Argument seem obscure in some of the Parts of it, that must be imputed to the dark Notions of the Old Philosophers upon this Matter, and the Superstitious Regard they had to Judicial Astrology; which *Simplicius* himself is content only so far to comply with, as to allow some considerable Influence of the Heavens upon the Bodies and Tempers of Men; and that Stroke, which the Complexions of People have, in forming the Dispositions of their Minds: Some Passages there are too, which proceed upon the Hypotheses of the Pre-existence and Transmigration of Souls, and their being provided with Bodies of Good or Bad Complexions here, according to their Merits or Demerits in some former State. But in truth, this whole Notion of Judiciary Astrology is now very justly exploded, as groundless and fantastical; and many Modern Philosophers have proved it, by very substantial Arguments, to be no better. See particularly *Gassend*, in his Animadversions on the 10th Book of *Diogenes Laertius*.

neral, That those who go about to destroy it, do by no means consider or understand the Nature of the Soul, but overthrow its very Original Constitution, without seeming to be sensible of it. For they take away all Principle of Internal and Self-Motion, in which the Essence of the Soul chiefly consists: For it must be either moved of its own Accord, and then it is excited by a Cause within itself to its Appetites and Affections, and not thrust forward and dragg'd along, as Bodies are; or else it is moved by an External Force, and then it is purely Mechanical.

Again, They that will not allow us to have our Actions at our own Disposal, do not attend to, nor are able to account for the Vital Energy of the Soul, and its Assenting and Dissenting, Accepting or Rejecting Power. Now this is what Experience and Common Sense teaches every Man, that he hath a Power of Consenting and Refusing, Embracing and Declining, Agreeing to or Denying; and it is to no purpose to argue against that which we feel and find every Moment. But now all these are internal Motions, begun in the Soul itself; and not violent Impulses and Attractions from Things without us, such as Inanimate Creatures must be moved by. For This is the Difference between Animate and Inanimate Bodies, that the one Sort are moved by an Internal Principle, and the other are not. Now, according to this Distinction, that which puts the Inanimate into Motion must have a Principle of Motion of its own, and cannot itself be moved Mechanically. For if this derived its Motion from something else too, then, (as was urged before) the Body is not moved by this, but by that other Cause, from whence the Motion is at first imparted to this; and so the Body, being moved no longer from within, but by some forcible impression from without, as all other Inanimate Creatures are, must itself be concluded Inanimate.

Once

Once more, By denying that we have power over our Actions, and a liberty of Willing or not Willing, of Considering, Comparing, Choosing, Desiring, Declining, and the like, All Moral Distinctions are lost and gone, and Vertue and Vice utterly confounded. There is no longer any just ground left for Praise or Dispraise, Applause or Reproach, Rewards or Punishments. The Laws of God and Man instituted for those Purposes, and enforced by these Sanctions, are evacuated; and the very Foundations of them all torn up, and quite overturn'd. And then do but consider how dismal the Consequences must be; for when once we are come to this pass, all Order and Society must needs be lost, and nothing left us, but a Life of Rapine and Violence, of Misery and Confusion, a Life, not of Civilized Men, but of Ravenous and Wild Beasts.

But I expect, that the Adversaries of this Opinion, will appeal back again to our own Experience, and urge afresh. What? do we not often find our selves forced by the Tyranny of Ill Men, and the overbearing Torrent of our own Passions and the strong Bent of Natural Sympathies and Antipathies; Do not these compel us to do and suffer many things against our Wills. and such as no Man in his Senses would choose, if it were in his power to avoid? To this my Answer is still the same, That, notwithstanding all this, our Liberty is not destroyed, but the Choice upon these Occasions is still free, and our own. For here are Two things propos'd; and, though the side we take be not eligible for its own sake, and when considered absolutely; yet it is so, with regard to the present streights we are in, and when compared with something which we avoid by this means; and for this Reason it is, that we make choice of it. And it is utterly impossible, that a Man should be carried to do any thing without the consent of his own Mind; For he that seems to do

a thing without his own Choice, is a like Man that is thrust down a Precipice by some stronger Hand, which he cannot resist; and this Person is at that time under the circumstance of an Inanimate Creature; he does not act at all, but is purely passive in the case. So that, when we really do act, though with never so great unwillingness and reluctancy, yet still we choose to act after such and such a manner.

This is further evident from Men's own practice; for we find that several Persons take several ways, when yet the necessity that lies upon them is the same. Some choose to comply with what is imposed upon them, for fear of enduring some greater Evil, if they refuse it; and Others again are peremptory in the refusing it, as looking upon such compliance to be a greater Evil, than any Punishment they can possibly undergo, upon the account of their refusal. So that, even in those Actions that seem most involuntary, there is still a place for Liberty and Choice. For we must distinguish between what is Voluntary, and what is Free. That only is Voluntary, which would be chosen for its own sake; but that is Free, which we have power to choose, not only for its own sake, but for the sake of avoiding some greater Mischief. And indeed there are some cases in which we find both something Voluntary, and something Involuntary meet, for which Reason those are properly call'd *Mix'd Actions*; that is, when what is Eligible upon these Occasions, is not simply and absolutely so, but carries something along with it, which we should never choose, if we could help it. And *Homer* very elegantly describes this perplexity of Thought, and this mixture of Voluntariness and Involuntariness in the Soul, when he says to this purpose,

*Great Strife in my divided Breast I find,  
A Will consenting, yet unwilling Mind.*

These



These things I thought fit the rather to enlarge upon, because almost all the following Book depends upon this distinction of the *Things in our own power*: For the Design of it being wholly Moral and Instructive, he lays the true Foundation here at first, and shews us, what we ought to place all our Happiness and all our Unhappiness in; and that, being at our own Disposal, and endued with a Principle of Motion from within, we are to expect it all from our own Actions. For things that move Mechanically and necessarily, as they derive their Being from, so they owe all the Good and Evil they are capable of, to something else; and depend upon the Impressions made upon them from without, both for the thing itself, and for the Degree of it. But those Creatures, that act freely, and are themselves the cause of their own Motions and Operations, receive all their Good and Evil from these Operations. Now these Operations, properly speaking, with regard to Knowledge and Speculative Matters, are their Opinions and Apprehensions of things; but with regard to Desirable Objects, and Matters of Practice, they are the Appetites, and Aversions, and the Affections of the Soul. When therefore we have just Ideas, and our Notions agree with the things themselves, and when we apply our Desires and our Aversions to such Objects, and in such measures as we ought to do, then we are properly happy, and attain to that Perfection, which Nature hath designed us for, and made peculiar to us; but when we fail in these Matters, then we fail of that Happiness and Perfection too.

Now by our own Actions, I mean such as are wrought by our selves only, and need nothing more to effect them, but our own Choice. For as to our Actions that concern things without us, such as Sciences and Trades, and supplying the Necessities of Humane Life, and the making our selves Masters



of Knowledge, and the instructing others in it, or any other Employments and Professions that give us Credit and Reputation in the World, these are not entirely in our own power, but require many Helps and external Advantages in order to the compassing of them. But the regulating of our Opinions, and our own Choices, are properly and entirely our own Works, and stand in need of no Foreign Assistances. So that our Good and Evil depends upon our selves; for this we may be sure of, that no Man is accountable for those things, that do not come within the compass of his own power.

*But our Bodies, Possessions, Reputations, Preferments, and Places, of Honour and Authority, and in short, every thing besides our own Actions, are things out of our own power.*

The Reason why these are said to be out of our own power and Disposal, is not, because the Mind hath no part in them, or contributes nothing towards them; for it is plain, that both our Bodies and our Estates are put into a better or a worse Condition, in proportion to that provident Care the Soul takes of them, or the Neglect she is guilty of with regard to them. The Soul does also furnish Occasions for the acquiring Credit and Fame, and by her Diligence and Wisdom it is, that we attain to Posts of Greatness and Government. For indeed there could be no such thing as the exercise of Authority, especially as the World goes now, without the Choice and Consent of the Soul. But, because these things are not totally at her Disposal, and she is not the sole and absolute Mistress of them, but must be behold-ing to the favourable concurrence of several other things, to compass them, therefore they are said not to be in our own power. Thus the Body requires sound Seminal Principles, and a strong Constituti-on,

on, convenient Diet, and moderate Exercise, a wholesome Dwelling, a good Air, and sweet Water, and its Strength, and Ability to perform the functions of Nature, will depend upon all these. And yet these are all of them things so far out of our own reach, that we can neither bestow them upon our selves, nor keep off the contrary Inconveniences, when we would. When a more Potent Enemy rushes in, and assaults us, we would be glad to lie undiscovered, but cannot make our selves Invisible. When we are Sick, we desire a speedy Recovery, and yet our Wishes do not bring it to pass.

The case is the same with our Wealth and Possessions too; for they are owing to a World of fortunate Accidents, that contribute to our getting them, and to as many unfortunate Accidents that conspire to deprive us of them; Accidents too mighty for us to struggle with, or prevent.

Reputation and Fame, are no more in our power than Riches: For, though by the management of our selves, we give the Occasions of Esteem or Disesteem, yet still the Opinion is not Ours, but Theirs, that entertain it; and when we have done all we can, we lie at their mercy, to think what they please of us. Hence it comes to pass, that some who are profane and irreligious Men at the bottom, gain the Character of Piety and Vertue, and impose, not upon others only, but sometimes upon themselves too, with a false appearance of Religion. And yet on the other hand, others who have no Notions of a Deity, but what are highly reverent and becoming, that never charge God with any of our Frailties or Imperfections, or behave themselves like Men that think so of him, are mistaken by some People for Infidels and Atheists. And thus the Reserved and Temperate Conversation, is despised and traduced by some, for meer Senselessness and Stupidity. So that the being well esteemed of is by no means in our own

power, but depends upon the pleasure of those that think well or ill of us:

Posts of Authority and Government cannot subsist without Inferiors to be governed, and subordinate Officers to assist in the governing of them: And particularly in such States, as allow Places to be bought and sold, and make Preferment the price, not of Merit but Money; There a Man that wants a Purse, cannot rise, though he would never so fain. From whence we conclude, that all things of this Nature are not in our own power, because they are not our Works, nor such as follow upon our Choice of them.

I only add one Remark more here, which is, That of all the things said to be out of our power, the Body is first mentioned; and that for this very good Reason, because the Wants of this expose us to all the rest. For Money is at the bottom of all Wars and Contentions, and this we cannot be without, but must seek it, in order to the providing convenient Food and Raiment, and supplying the Necessities of the Body.

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## C H A P. II.

*The things in our own power, are in their own Nature Free, not capable of being countermanded, or hindered; but those that are not in our power, are Feeble, Servile, liable to Opposition, and not ours, but anothers.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**FTER having distinguished between those things that are, and those that are not, in our own power; he proceeds, in the next place, to describe the Qualities proper to each of them. The former sort  
he

he tells us, are Free, because it is not in the power of any other Thing or Person, either to compel us to them, or to keep us back from them. Nor is the management, and the enjoyment of them, at any Bodies Disposal but our own; for this is the true notion of *Freedom*, to govern ones self as one pleases, and to be under the command and direction of no other whatsoever. But the things out of our power, which are subject to be given or withheld, it is not we but they are Masters of them, in whose power it is to communicate them to us, or keep them from us; and therefore these are not *Free*, but *Servile*, and at the pleasure of others.

So again, those things are Self-sufficient, and consequently *firm and strong*; but these that depend upon the assistance of another, are *weak and Indigent*.

Again, Those cannot be countermanded, [as being in a Man's own Power;] For who can pretend to correct my Opinions, and compel me to such or such particular Notions? Who is able to put a restraint upon my Desires or my Aversions? But now the things that are not in our power, are so contrived, as to depend upon the Inclinations of other People, and we may have them, or lose them as they please: And, accordingly these are subject to many Hindrances and Disappointments; so as either never to be at all, or to be destroyed again when they have been; never to be put into my Hands, or to be snatched away from me, after that I am possessed of them.

Once more, It is evident, that the things in our power, are *our own*, because they are our Actions; and this Consideration gives us the greatest propriety in them that can be: But those that depend upon the pleasure of any Body else, are properly *another's*. From whence we must infer, that every kind of Good or Evil, which respects the things in our power, is properly ours; as for instance, True or False Apprehensions and Opinions, Regular or Irregular  
Desires,

Desires, and the like: These are the things that make a Man happy or unhappy. But for the things out of our power, they are none of ours: Those that relate to the Body, belong not to the Man, strictly speaking, but only to our Shell, and our Instrument of Action. But if we talk of a little Reputation, an empty and popular Applause, alas! this is something much more remote, and consequently of little or no concern at all to us.

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### C H A P. III.

*Remember then, that if you mistake those things for Free, which Nature hath made Servile, and fancy That your own, which is indeed another's; you shall be sure to meet with many Hindrances and Disappointments, much Trouble, and great Distractions, and be continually finding fault both with God and Man. But if you take things right, as they really are, looking upon no more to be your own, than indeed is so; and all that to be another's, which really belongs to him; no body shall ever be able to put any constraint upon you, no body shall check or disappoint you; you shall accuse no body, shall complain of nothing, shall never do any thing unwillingly, shall receive harm from no body, shall have no Enemy; for no Man will be able to do you any prejudice.*

### C O M M E N T.

**H**E had told us before, what *was*, and what *was* not in our own power, and described the Qualities peculiar to both sorts, and what relation they bear to us: That the things *in our power* are properly

OURS;

ours; that those out of our power, are anothers. And now he advises, that Men would manage themselves suitably to the Nature of these things, and not be guilty of perverse and ridiculous Absurdities, with regard to them. For this is the true Foundation of all the Happiness, or the Wretchedness, of our Lives. The succeeding well in our Attempts, attaining to the Good we aim at, and restraining all the Mischief that could befall us, makes us happy. The being disappointed in our Hopes, missing our Ends and Advantages, or the falling into Mischiefs and Inconveniences, are the things that make us Miserable. But now, if our Happiness consists in regular Desires, and just Aversions, and these Desires and Aversions are in our own power; we must seek our Happiness here, that we may be sure to find it, and to find that Happiness which is properly ours, and peculiar to us. (And we shall be sure to find it; for how is it possible we should not, when the Regulation of our Desires and Aversions, depends entirely upon our selves?)

On the other hand, if we place our Affections and Desires upon things not in our power, and expect to find our Happiness in them, this double Misfortune must needs follow upon it: One way the Disappointment is unavoidable, that, though we should prove successful, and obtain what we are so fond of, yet still these things are not what we take them for, nor can we meet with that which is properly our Happiness in them. But besides, it is agreeable to all the Reason in the World, to believe, that generally we must needs be disappointed of the things themselves. For how should it be otherwise, when a Man sets his Heart upon that which is anothers, as if it were his own; and when he must depend upon other Persons and Accidents, whether he shall ever obtain it or no?

Now

Now the natural Conſequences of ſuch Diſappointments, are, the being interrupted, and having all our Meaſures broken, and a World of Grief and Remorſe, when we find our Pains have been employed to no purpoſe, and that we are engaged in wrong Courſes. For, as Pleaſure and Joy are the Effects of Good Succeſs, the accompliſhing what we wiſh, and being delivered from what we dread; ſo, when we are overtaken by the Miſchiefs we feared, and defeated in our Endeavours after what we deſired, we preſently fall into Trouble and Diſcontent, and complain of every one that we think contributed to our Miſfortune, and ſpare neither Men, nor ſometimes Providence, and God himſelf.

Befides, There is another Miſchief comes of this; for by being ſo tenderly affected for things that are not in our power, we loſe ſometimes thoſe that are; and he that deprives us of what he could take away, robs us of what he hath no power to take from us; *viz.* Regular and Moderate Deſires and Aversions. But if we be diſpoſed and affected as we ought, and make a true Diſtinction between what is ours, and what is not; if we ſettle our Affections, and beſtow our Care, not upon things which belong to another, but upon our own, our proper Happineſs, and what falls within the compaſs of our own power; that is, upon the entertaining ſuch Deſires and Aversions, as are agreeable to Reaſon and Nature; then we may reſt ſecure, that we ſhall never be annoyed by any Conſtraint or Compulſion, any Diſappointment or Hindrance, but ſhall have the ſole Government, and entire Diſpoſal, of ſuch Deſires and Aversions. And if ſo, then we ſhall have no occaſion of Grief or Remorſe; for that can happen but in Two caſes, either the miſſing of what we wiſh'd, or the falling into what we fear'd, and would fain have avoided. Now we can never be fruſtrated in our *Deſires*, nor ever be endamaged by any inconvenience we *fear*, provided  
we



we will but make those things our care, which are in our own power. Consequently, we can never live in awe and dread of any Man; for the reason, why we fear any body, is because he may do us some prejudice, or some way obstruct our Advantage. But there is no Man alive, that hath it in his power to offer Violence to our Desires and Aversions; and these are the things, in which the Man that lives according to the Dictates of right Reason, places his Happiness. So that at this rate, we can have *no Enemy* neither, for he is accounted our Enemy, that does us mischief; but no body can do this to a Man who is out of the power of all Mankind to hurt him: By the same Reason, such a Person will *accuse no Man, complain of nothing*, nor ever *do any thing against his Will*. So that the Life of this Man is untainted with Perturbation and Sensual Pleasure, must needs be above all Grief, and all Fear, absolutely Free, and exquisitely Happy.

And here we may observe farther, how excellently well he proves the Life of a Wise and Good Man, to be not only the best and most for ones advantage, but the pleasantest and most for ones satisfaction too. For, as *Plato* tells us, Every Creature does, by natural Instinct, endeavour after Pleasure, and run away from Pain: Now some Pleasures attend those things, that are truly good and advantageous to us; and Others, those that are prejudicial and hurtful. And this makes it necessary to take good heed what Choice we make, that so we may embrace and pursue, and accustom our selves to, the Enjoyment of such Pleasures as may be beneficial to us. For, that Temperance, (for Example,) is really more delightful to a Vertuous Man, than Extravagance and Licentiousness are to the Dissolute, there needs no other proof than this, that many Debauchees leave their loose way of Living, and turn Sober, when they consider and come to a better Sense of things. But  
there



there are no instances to be produced of any Temperate Persons, who proceed upon wise and reasonable Considerations, that ever abandoned themselves to Debauchery and Excess. Now if this way of Living had not more than ordinary Pleasure in it, Men would never choose it with so much eagerness and satisfaction. And, that such a Vertuous Life as this, must needs be more easie and pleasant, *Epictetus* demonstrates, from its being Free and Uncontrouled, above Checks and Contradictions, above Hindrances and Disappointments, but depending and doing all upon the Dictates of one's own Mind: And thus those happy Men live, who place all their Good and Evil in their own Actions, and the use of that Liberty and Power, that Nature hath given them.

#### C H A P. IV.

*Since therefore the Advantages, you propose to your self, are so valuable, remember that you ought not to content your self with a cold and moderate pursuit of them; but that some things must be wholly laid aside, and others you must be content to suspend for a while. But if you will needs be grasping at both, and expect to compass these, and at the same time attain unto Honours and Riches too, there will be great hazard of your losing the latter, by pursuing the former; or if not so; yet you will be sure to find your self frustrated in all that can make you Free and Happy, while you pursue the latter.*

#### C O M M E N T.

**H**AVING directed us, what it is we are to expect Happiness from, and how desirable the Life of such Persons must needs be, who depend not upon External Enjoyments, and things out of their power

power for it, but place it in their own natural Liberty, and what falls within the compass of that: That such a Life is above all Molestation and Controul, safe from the Assaults of any ill Accidents, not only advantageous, but easie and delightful too, the Good it desires never deceiving, the Evil it declines never overtaking, but in one Word, exquisitely Happy, and divinely Blest; he now proceeds to excite in his Reader, a Zeal worthy of such mighty Expectations, and tells him, that he must not look upon this as a Business by the by, while his main Design and Care is for something else; but that his Pains and his Affection must be so entirely devoted to this one thing, as not to admit of any thing besides, into a partnership with it.

The External Enjoyments of the World then must fit so loose about his Heart, that, as many of them as are inconsistent with a Vertuous Conversation, and the Rules of right Reason, (such as Excess, and Sensual Pleasure, and sordid Wealth, and Power, and Ambition,) must be absolutely discarded; it being impossible, that any Man, who makes these his Concern, should at the same time preserve his own Freedom, and Innocence, and Wisdom. But as for such others of them, as may be no Obstructions to the Souls Good, provided they be managed with Discretion, such as a Decent Dwelling, a competent Equipage, the satisfactions of Marriage, the care of continuing a good Family, the Exercise of just Authority, and some degree of Solitude and Pains for the providing all necessary Supports: These, and all the rest of the like nature, he advises his Scholars to supersede for some convenient time at least. And that for very good reason; it being necessary, that they who would be truly and eminently Good, should make the Exercise of Vertue their whole Business, and constant study, and suffer no other thing whatsoever to divert them from it,

Whoever

Whoever proposes to himself, not merely to be popular, and impose upon the World with a dissembled Vertue, but to answer the Character of a Sincere and Truly Good Man, must take care of two Things. First, He must attain to such a Degree of Wisdom, as may enable him to distinguish between what will really make for his Advantage, and what will turn to his Prejudice; and then Secondly, he must keep under his brutish Appetites, that they may never revolt, nor rebel against Reason; but may be so ready and observant to it, as to move, only at such Times, and in such Proportions, and toward such Objects, as the Reasonable Soul shall limit, and prescribe to them. For Men are betrayed into Vice two ways; either for want of the Understanding's being sufficiently enlightened, when we do not discern what is good and proper to be done; or else, through the Ungovernableness of the Affections and Sensual Appetites, when, though the Mind hath a Notion, though but a weak and imperfect one, of what ought to be done, yet the Passions mutiny and make head, usurp a Power that belongs not to them, and over-rule the calm Judgment of sober Reason. Thus the *Tragedian* introduces *Medea* complaining of the Impotence of her Mind, when about to murder her Children;

*Remorse and Sense of Guilt draw back my Soul,  
But stronger Passion does her Pow'rs controul;  
With Rage transported, I push boldly on,  
And see the Precipice I cannot shun.*

It is necessary then, in order to enjoying the World, so as to maintain ones own Vertue and Innocence, that a Man provide himself with a competent Degree of Knowledge and Prudence, and reduce his Appetites to Moderation and Obedience. And when he engages in Business and Conversation,  
that

that he be sure to do it cautiously and seasonably, and to put on this impenetrable Armour. For this Reason *Epictetus* is urgent with his young Beginners to suspend even those Things that are consistent with Vertue, for a while, till Time and Practice have confirmed their good Habits, and qualified them to use the World with Safety and Discretion. For, as it is Rashness and Folly to go into the Field unarm'd, so is it to engage with the World, till a Man hath fortified himself with Temper and Prudence.

But he acquaints us farther, that for those, who as yet are but raw and unexperienced in Vertue, to employ themselves in Business and Worldly Care, is not only inconvenient and hazardous, but ridiculous and vain, and to no manner of purpose. They that place their Desires and their Aversions upon such Things as are out of a Man's Power, must needs fail of Prudence and Moderation, and cannot have Inclinations and Aversions grounded upon, and govern'd by, right Reason, which are the only Things that make Men free, and easie, and happy. For they must of Necessity live in Subjection to their wild and brutish Passions, which Lord it over them, like so many cruel Masters, or enraged Tyrants. They must live perpetually too in a slavish Fear of all those Men, in whose Power it is, either to gratifie their Hopes, or to obstruct and defeat them; who can intercept the Good they wish, or inflict the Ills they fear, lest they should exert this Power to their Prejudice.

Besides all this, When our Care and Concern is laid out upon the seeming good Things without us, it exposes us to Disappointments in our true Happiness, by taking off our Care from those Things that are more properly Ours. For they who divide their Desires and Endeavours between both, do neither make a just Distinction between those Things that are, and those that are not, really good; nor do they express a becoming Concern for that which

is their own peculiar Happiness; nor bestow the Pains about it that it deserves: and till they do so, it is impossible they should attain to it. For the most part therefore, they fall short of those external Advantages they propose to themselves too, because they do not apply their Minds to these entirely, but now and then are diverted by Desires and Endeavours after their true and proper Happiness, and, out of a secret Shame and Consciousness, that this requires their Care, fall into such Perplexities and Distractions as restrain and stop their Career, and will not suffer them to do nor to endure every Thing that is necessary for obtaining the false Good they chiefly pursue.

Now, though such a divided Life as this must be acknowledg'd to be less vicious than that which addict's itself wholly to the World without any Check or Interruption at all; yet it cannot but be exceeding troublesome and uneasie, much more so indeed, than that of the Worldling. For it is one continual Labour in vain, ever striving to reconcile Contradictions, full of perpetual Inconsistencies and Remorses, Dislike of ones own Actions, and eternal Self-Condernnation. So that it must needs be infinitely painful and detestable.

But it is worth our taking Notice, that *Epictetus*, upon these Occasions, does frequently in the following Discourses admonish and awaken us with a *Remember*. The Reason of which is, that he addresses himself to the Rational Soul; which, though it be naturally and essentially endued with just Ideas of Things, and hath an inbred Faculty of discerning and adhering to Truth, yet finds, but too often, that this Eye of Reason is darkned, hath dim and confus'd Representations of Things impos'd upon it, by the material Principle, to which it is united; and by this means is betrayed into Ignorance and Forgetfulness, the true Cause of all its Miscarriages and all its Miseries. So that, considered in these Circumstances.

cumstances, it stands in need of a continual Monitor, to rouse it into Thought and Remembrance.

But when he says, that *A Man who proposes to himself Advantages so valuable, ought not to be content with a moderate Prosecution of them*; This Expression is not to be understood, as we take it, when used to distinguish between Moderation and Excess, but is intended here of the Defect, and signifies a supine Neglect and cold Indifference. For where our Happiness and our All is at stake, there, as Pindar expresses himself,

*Distress and Danger should our Courage fire,  
Move Generous Thoughts, and brave Resolves inspire.*

## CHAP. V.

*When therefore any frightful and discouraging Imagination assaults you, harden your self, and meet it boldly, with this Reflection, That it is only your Apprehension of Things, and not the real Nature of the Things themselves. Then bring it to the Test, and examine it by such Rules of Morality as you are Master of; but especially by this most material Distinction, Of Things that are, or are not, in our Power. And if, upon Enquiry, it be found one of the latter sort, remember that it is what you are not at all concerned in, and slight it accordingly.*

## COMMENT.

**H**E had told us, That the Man, who proposeth to himself the Attainment of Virtue and Happiness, must be constant and indefatigable, and not suffer the World, or any of its Temptations, to se-

duce or draw him off from the pursuit of it. But since, even they who do make these Things their Study and Care, are yet subject to frequent Fancies and Apprehensions, some that put them upon desiring some of those external Advantages, and others that terrifie them with Calamities of that kind; he informs us here how to manage such Apprehensions, so as to receive no Inconvenience from them. And these Apprehensions he calls *frightful and discouraging*, because they are extravagant and unreasonable, and embitter ones Life with a World of Terrors and Troubles, by the Excess and Irregularity of their Motions.

In the following Discourses he advises more at large not to be hurried away, and immediately transported with any Imagination, whether it tend to Hope or Fear: And here he says much the same Thing in fewer Words; That a Man ought to harden and set himself against it, and disarm it of all its Force by this Consideration, That it is but a Fancy of our own, and no more. Now our Fancies, we know, do sometimes give us the Representations of Things as they really are, as in Things that are indeed Pleasant and Beneficial; and sometimes they delude us with wild Inconsistencies, gaudy Vanities, and empty Dreams. But the Strength of these Representations depends upon the Impressions which they make in our Minds. And this is exceedingly weakned, by making that single Consideration habitual to us, That there is very often a wide Difference between the Things themselves, and the Representations of them to us: For, when once we are thus fixed, no Violence they can use will be able to juggle out our Reason, nor pervert our Judgment; which, he tells us, as soon as we have allayed the Heat of the Imagination, and made our Minds quiet and calm, should be presently employed in a nice Examination of the Idea represented to us.

Now



Now there are several Rules to try it by: Some taken from the Nature of these Idea's themselves, and the Things they represent; as, Whether they be such Objects as tend to the Good of the Mind, or whether they only concern our Bodies, or our Fortunes; Whether they contribute to any real Advantage, or whether Pleasure is the only Thing they can pretend to; Whether what they propose be feasible or not: There is likewise another Method, which proceeds upon the Judgment of Wise and Unwise Men, and the Concern they express for them, but especially upon the Judgment and Determination of Almighty God. For that which God himself, and Wise and Good Men, have approved of, every one that consults the Safety and Happiness of his Soul, must needs be convinced, will challenge his greatest Care and Concern; As on the contrary, Whatever They dislike and condemn, ought by all means to be detested and avoided. And no Man yet ever arrived to that Degree of Folly, or was so far blinded by Passion and Lust, as to persuade himself, that Injustice, and Luxury, and Excess, are Things well-pleasing to God.

But though there are many Rules which may be serviceable to us, in distinguishing between the several Idea's and the Things they represent, yet there is one peculiar to Men, considered as Men; and which is of general use upon all Occasions. And this depends upon that Distinction of *Things that Are, and Things that are Not in our own Power*. For if the Object that presents itself as a Thing inviting our Desire, or provoking our Aversion, be out of our own Disposal, the ready Course to be taken, is, to satisfy our Selves, and to dismiss it with this Answer, *That this is no part of our Concern*. For it is impossible for any Thing to be strictly Good or Evil to us, which is not within our own Power; for the Freedom of the Will is the true specifick Difference of Humane Nature. The very being of a Creature thus quali-



fied necessarily infers this Prerogative, That all its Good and all its Evil should depend merely upon its own Choice.

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## C H A P. VI.

*Remember, That the Thing which recommends any Desire, is a Promise and Prospect of obtaining the Object you are in pursuit of; as on the contrary, the Thing which your Aversion aims at, and proposes to you, is the escaping the Evil you fear. And in these Cases, he, that is balked of his Desires, is an unfortunate, and he, that is overtaken by the Mischief he declines, is a miserable Man. But now, if you confine your Aversions to those Evils only, which are at the Disposal of your own Will, you can never be overtaken by any Calamity you would decline; but if you extend them to such Things as Sickness, or Poverty, or Death, you will of Necessity be miserable.*

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## C H A P. VII.

*Let your Aversions then be taken off from all Things out of your own Power, and transferred to such Things, as are contrary to Nature, within your own Power. And as for Desires, lay them, for the present, wholly aside: for if you fix them upon Things out of your Power, you are sure to be unsuccessful; and if you would restrain them to fit and proper Objects, such as come within it, know  
this*

*this is not come to your turn yet. Let your Mind therefore go no farther than to mere Tendencies and Propensions, to moderate and use these gently, gradually, and cautiously.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HIS now follows in a direct Method from what went before, and is, as it were, a Demonstration of the Truth of the last Chapter, where we were told, that our Apprehensions and Idea's of Things desirable must be regulated, by that necessary Distinction of *What is* and *what is not within our own Power*. That the Observation of this Rule would be sure to make us successful and happy, and the Neglect of it unfortunate and wretched. To this purpose, his first business is, to explain, What sort of Persons we use to esteem lucky or unlucky; and he tells us, that the End our Aversions propose to themselves, is, not to fall into the Mischief we endeavour to decline; so that in this case, the missing our Object is fortunate, as on the contrary, it is unfortunate in cases of Desire, when we do not get our Object. And the Misfortune opposite to good Success is, when the Thing we would avoid does happen to us; for here we get our Object indeed, but then this getting is to our Prejudice, and what we might much better have been without.

When he hath set these Matters in a true Light, then he proceeds thus. If you take care to make those Things only the Objects of your Aversion, which are contrary to Nature, and within the compass of your own choice, as Intemperance for Example, and Injustice, and the like; you can never be overtaken by any Thing you fear, because in these Matters you may be sure to escape if you please; and consequently, you are sure never to be unfortunate. But if instead

of these, you pitch upon Sickneſs or Poverty, or any of thoſe Things that are out of your own Diſpoſal, you muſt needs fall into calamitous Circumſtances ſometimes, becauſe it cannot depend upon your ſelf, whether you ſhall be delivered from theſe or no. So again for Deſire, That Man cannot ſecure himſelf againſt frequent Diſappointments, that fixes upon Objects out of his own Power. But if our Deſires and our Aversions be confined to Matters within our own Power and Choice, then it will not be poſſible for us to be balked in our Hopes or overtaken by our Fears, but Happineſs and Succeſs will attend us continually. The Subſtance and Connexion of all which, in ſhort, lies here. He that extends his Deſires and his Aversions to Things out of the Diſpoſal of his own Will, very frequently miſſes his Aim, falls ſhort in his Hopes, and is overtaken by his Fears; and he muſt needs do ſo, becauſe theſe Things depend not on himſelf, but upon others; now ſuch a one is confeſſed to be an unſucceſſful and unfortunate Perſon, and therefore wretched and miſerable.

But it is worth our notice, how *Epictetus* imitates *Socrates's* way of Arguing upon this Occaſion, and accommodates himſelf to his Hearers, ſo as, by deſcending to their Notions, to raiſe them up higher to ſomething better and more perfect. For, that Happineſs conſiſts in obtaining Mens Wiſhes and Deſires, and in eſcaping the Miſchiefs and Dangers they fear, is the general Notion Men have of it; and thus far Men of all Perſuaſions, and the moſt diſtant Tempers and Converſations agree. But in this they differ, that they do not employ their Deſires and Aversions alike. For the Wiſe and Vertuous purſue ſuch Objects only as are really profitable and good, and avoid only the truly miſchievous and ſubſtantial Evils; and this they do by the free Guidance of their Reaſon, and the due Government of their Paſſions; for the brutiſh Appetites in Them are ſo ſubdued, ſo  
disciplin'd

disciplin'd by Acts of Obedience to the Judgment, that they do not so much as think any thing pleasant, but what Reason hath approved, and found to be so. But the Generality of Mankind, partly for want of duly improving their Judgments, and partly from their brutish Affections being kept in perpetual Commotion and Disorder, distinguish the Objects of their Desire by no other Mark than Pleasure; without examining whether this Pleasure be such as makes for their true Advantage or not: And these Men often hit upon very impure and unsincere Pleasures; such as carry a Mixture and Allay of Pain along with them. For, in truth, they are not really and properly Pleasures, but only the empty Shadows and false Resemblances of them. But still, as was said before, all Mankind are agreed in the general, that Prosperity and Success consists in the obtaining of the good Things we wish, and keeping off the Evils we fear. So that even the Sensual and most Vicious Men may convince themselves from this Discourse, that the true way never to be disappointed in their Desires, nor overtaken by their Fears, is, to agree, that those Things which are within our Power are the only good and proper Objects of Desire; and that the Evils in our own Power are the only noxious and destructive, and proper Objects of Fear and Hatred. Since it is plain, that they who fix upon Things without their Power, must needs fall short very frequently of their Hopes, and lose what they desire, and endure what they fear: And this is what even Vicious Persons acknowledge to be a great Misfortune.

*Let then, says he, your Aversions be taken off from all Things out of your own Power, and transferred to such Things as are contrary to Nature, within your Power.* For if you place them upon Sicknels, or Poverty, or the like, you must unavoidably be unfortunate, because these are Things not in your Power to escape. For, though we can contribute considerably towards  
the

of these, you pitch upon Sickness or Poverty, or any of those Things that are out of your own Disposal, you must needs fall into calamitous Circumstances sometimes, because it cannot depend upon your self, whether you shall be delivered from these or no. So again for Desire, That Man cannot secure himself against frequent Disappointments, that fixes upon Objects out of his own Power. But if our Desires and our Aversions be confined to Matters within our own Power and Choice, then it will not be possible for us to be balked in our Hopes or overtaken by our Fears, but Happiness and Success will attend us continually. The Substance and Connexion of all which, in short, lies here. He that extends his Desires and his Aversions to Things out of the Disposal of his own Will, very frequently misses his Aim, falls short in his Hopes, and is overtaken by his Fears; and he must needs do so, because these Things depend not on himself, but upon others; now such a one is confessed to be an unsuccessful and unfortunate Person, and therefore wretched and miserable.

But it is worth our notice, how *Epictetus* imitates *Socrates's* way of Arguing upon this Occasion, and accommodates himself to his Hearers, so as, by descending to their Notions, to raise them up higher to something better and more perfect. For, that Happiness consists in obtaining Mens Wishes and Desires, and in escaping the Mischiefs and Dangers they fear, is the general Notion Men have of it; and thus far Men of all Persuasions, and the most distant Tempers and Conversations agree. But in this they differ, that they do not employ their Desires and Aversions alike. For the Wise and Vertuous pursue such Objects only as are really profitable and good, and avoid only the truly mischievous and substantial Evils; and this they do by the free Guidance of their Reason, and the due Government of their Passions; for the brutish Appetites in Them are so subdued, so disciplin'd

disciplin'd by Acts of Obedience to the Judgment, that they do not so much as think any thing pleasant, but what Reason hath approved, and found to be so. But the Generality of Mankind, partly for want of duly improving their Judgments, and partly from their brutish Affections being kept in perpetual Commotion and Disorder, distinguish the Objects of their Desire by no other Mark than Pleasure; without examining whether this Pleasure be such as makes for their true Advantage or not: And these Men often hit upon very impure and unsincere Pleasures; such as carry a Mixture and Allay of Pain along with them. For, in truth, they are not really and properly Pleasures, but only the empty Shadows and false Resemblances of them. But still, as was said before, all Mankind are agreed in the general, that Prosperity and Success consists in the obtaining of the good Things we wish, and keeping off the Evils we fear. So that even the Sensual and most Vicious Men may convince themselves from this Discourse, that the true way never to be disappointed in their Desires, nor overtaken by their Fears, is, to agree, that those Things which are within our Power are the only good and proper Objects of Desire; and that the Evils in our own Power are the only noxious and destructive, and proper Objects of Fear and Hatred. Since it is plain, that they who fix upon Things without their Power, must needs fall short very frequently of their Hopes, and lose what they desire, and endure what they fear: And this is what even Vicious Persons acknowledge to be a great Misfortune.

*Let then, says he, your Aversions be taken off from all Things out of your own Power, and transferred to such Things as are contrary to Nature, within your Power. For if you place them upon Sicknels, or Poverty, or the like, you must unavoidably be unfortunate, because these are Things not in your Power to escape. For, though we can contribute considerably towards the*

the avoiding of them, yet the Thing is not wholly and absolutely in our Selves, but it will depend upon fundry other Circumstances and Accidents, whether our Endeavours shall succeed, or no. But, if we would follow his Advice, take off our Fears from these Things, and put them upon those within our own Choice, that are prejudicial and against Nature: If, for Instance, we would make it our Care to avoid Erroneous Opinions, and false Apprehensions of Things, and whatever else can be any Obstruction to a good Conversation, and such a Life, as Reason and Nature have made suitable to our Character; we should never be oppressed with any of the Calamities we fear, because it is in our own Power absolutely to avoid these Things. For nothing else but our own Aversions and Resolutions are requisite to the doing it effectually.

All this is sufficiently plain, and needs no Enlargement; but what follows hath something of difficulty in it. For what can be his meaning in that Advice, that *All Desire should for the present be wholly laid aside?* There is a manifest Reason, why we should discharge all those Desires that concern Things without our Power; for this evidently makes for our Advantage, both in regard of the Disappointments and perpetual Uneasinesses, which this Course delivers us from; and also in Consideration of the Things themselves, which, though we should suppose no such Troubles and Disappointments attending them, are yet not capable of bringing us any real Advantage, nor that which is the proper Happiness of a Man.

But what shall we say to his forbidding the Desire even of those good Things which come within the Disposal of our own Wills? The Reason he gives is this, *Because you are not yet come to this.* But if you were come to it, there would then be no farther Occasion for Desire; for this is no other than a Motion of the Mind desiring, by which it reaches forward  
to



to what it is not yet come to. And this seems to cut off all Desire in general; for how is it possible to obtain any Good without first desiring it? And especially, if (as hath been formerly shewn) the Good and Happinels of a Man consist, not so much in Actions, and the effecting what he would, as in the entertaining such Desires and Aversions as are agreeable to Nature and Reason; what Ground can there be for suspending all our Desires, and utterly forbidding us for a while to entertain any at all? Or how can we imagine it possible for a Man to live void of all Desire? I add, that this looks like a direct Contradiction to what went before, when in the 4th Chapter he gave this Advice, *Since therefore the Advantages you propose to your self are so exceeding valuable, Remember that you ought not to content your self with a cold and moderate pursuit of them.* For by that Pursuit he did not understand any Bodily Motion, but the Eagerness of the Soul, by which, in the Act of Desiring, she moves towards, and makes after the Object. And again, How can we suppose any *Affections and Propensions* without Desire? For the Order of Things infers a Necessity of Desire, before there can be any such Affections and Propensions of the Soul.

In Answer to these Objections, it may be replied, that *Epictetus* here addresses himself to Young Beginners in Philosophy, for whom it cannot be safe to indulge any Desires at all, till they be first competently informed what are the Objects which they ought to fix upon. And so that these Affections and Propensions of the Soul are only to be understood of those first Motions to or from its Object, which the *Stoicks* contend are always antecedent to Desire and Aversion.

Or if he direct his Discourse to Men already instructed, then we must not interpret the Words as they seem to sound; nor suppose, that he intends to cut off all Desire of the good Things in our Power,  
absolutely



absolutely speaking; but only to restrain the Vehemence and Eagerness of that Aversion and Desire, which in a moderate Degree he is content to allow. For you see, that he advises in the very same Place, to make use of our *Propensions and Affections of the Soul gently, coolly, and cautiously*. For we must necessarily move towards the Object of our Desires, and from that which is our Aversion; but our Desires and Aversions are antecedent to such Motions to and from the Object, and do produce them, as Causes do their proper Effects.

Again, When he advised before, that Men would not content themselves with a cold and moderate pursuit of such valuable Advantages, it was no part of his Intention to recommend an eager and violent Desire, but rather, that we should be so fixed and resolved in this prosecution, as to satisfy our selves in doing what he adds immediately after, *the abandoning some Enjoyments for all together, and the suspending of others for some convenient time*.

Now a vehement Degree in any of these things, either the Propensities of the Mind, or the Desires and Aversions of it, is with great reason condemned, because of the ill Consequences it is apt to have, when Men shoot beyond the Mark, through an Excess of Desire, and attempt things above their Strength. For this usually tends to the weakning of the Soul, as much as overstraining injures the Body. And this is an Inconvenience which many have found experimentally, from that immoderate Violence and heat of Action, which Men that are fond of Exercise, and eager in it, are most unseasonably guilty of. For there are but very few Persons of such a Constitution, either in Body or Mind, as to be able, all on the sudden, to change from a bad State to a sound and good one. *Diogenes* indeed, and *Crates*, and *Zeno*, and such eminent Lights as these, might be so happy; but for the generality of People, their Alterations

tions are gradual and slow; they fall by little and little, and they recover themselves so too; and this is such a Condition as Nature hath appointed for us, with regard to the Soul, as well as the Body. For gentle Methods are commonly more likely to hold, and a more safe way of proceeding. These keep the Soul from spending its strength too fast, and put some Checks upon its Forwardness; which is the true way, both of preserving, and by degrees, though but slow ones, of confirming and increasing, the vigour of it. This is the true Reason, why we are advised to put a Restraint upon the Affections of the Soul, to move *leisurely and gradually*, and *with much coolness and caution*. That is, to slacken the Reins by little and little; and not to let loose our Desires and our Aversions, nor give them their full range immediately. For the Man, that from a dissolute and headstrong course of Life, would bring himself to the contrary Habits of Sobriety and strict Discipline, must not presently leap to the distant Extream, from Luxury and Excess, to Abstemiousness and Fasting; but he must advance by Steps, and be satisfied at first, with abating somewhat of his former Extravagance. For what the Author of the Golden Verses hath observed, is very considerable upon these Occasions.

*The Rash use Force, and with soft Pleasures Fight;  
The Wise Retreat, and save themselves by Flight.*

Thus it is in Matters of Learning and Knowledge; Young Students must admit the Idea's of things warily, and not take every Appearance of Truth, for an uncontestable Axiom; that so, if upon a Second view, there be occasion to alter their Judgments, it may be done with greater Readiness and Ease, when their Minds are not too strongly possess'd with their first Notions.

Once more, *Epictetus* advises his Scholars to move *leisurely and gradually* to Objects of both kinds; but  
now,

now, if so much Caution and Coldness be necessary, why does he allow our Aversions any more than our Desires? for he bids us *take off our Aversions from those Prejudicial things that are not in our power, and bend them against those that are*; and yet at the same time he prohibits all manner of Desire, and for some time, will not permit us to indulge that at all.

One probable account of this may be taken from the Nature and Condition of Men, who are beginning to reform; for the first step towards a good Life, is to throw off all the Venom and Corruption of a bad one; and till the Breast have discharged itself of this, no Nourishment can be had from any Principles of Vertue infused into it. What the great Hippocrates has most excellently observed concerning our Bodies, is much more truly applicable to our Souls, That so long as a Man continues full of gross and noxious Humours, the Nourishment he receives, does not feed Him, so much as his Distemper. For the Vicious Principles, that had taken Possession, corrupt all the Good ones that are put to them. Sometimes they make us disrelish them, as unpleasant; sometimes dread and avoid them, as hurtful and injurious to us; sometimes condemn them as Evil, and reject them as impossible to be complied with. And all this while, the Disease gathers more strength, and grows upon us, by bringing us to a Contempt of better Principles, after a pretence of having tried, and found them defective. And thus at last it becomes Incurable, and will not so much as suffer us to admit of any Arguments or Actions that might advance us in Vertue, but produces in us a Loathing of all those Remedies that might contribute to our Recovery. Just as in the Jaundies, when the Vitiated Palate thinks Honey bitter, a Man nauseates it presently, and will never endure to taste Honey after, in order to the removing that Prejudice. Thus the Aversions are allowed in Young Beginners, because the Method of their

Cure requires it; and the first step towards a Reformation, is, by growing into a Dislike of Vice, to put themselves into a Condition of receiving Vertuous Principles and Good Instructions.

This Discourse is also excellently well suited to such Persons, in regard it shews them the right way to Liberty, and Security, and an easie Mind, that so their Lives may be pleasant and sweet to them; which indeed is the very thing that all Creatures aim at. Now, though an absolute freedom from Passion, and a Conversation in all points agreeable to the Rules of Decency and Nature, be the proper Excellency which we ought to desire and pursue; yet Beginners must satisfy themselves with less, and think they do very well, when they can abate of their Passions, and reduce them within some reasonable bounds, though they cannot gain an absolute Mastery over them: And they must expect to relapse sometimes, and are not to be condemned so much for falling, as encouraged and commended when they rise again. Such as these therefore are not yet arrived to the perfection of those things that should be the Object of their Desires: And this I take to be the meaning of that Expression, *This is not come to your turn yet; i. e.* the imperfect State you are in, hath not qualified you for such Desires: For when we aim at something that exceeds our Capacity, and find we cannot reach it, then Troubles and Disappointments, and a sinking of our Spirits, and sometimes a desponding Mind, follow upon it. They that are violently bent upon things above their Strength, slight such as are proportionable to it, and think them vile and despicable, because they judge of them by way of comparison with greater. And yet it is by small beginnings only, that we can ever arrive at great Perfections; and before we can cope with things above us, we must practise upon less, and make our selves Masters of such as we are a Match for.

## C H A P. VIII.

*Remember upon all Occasions, to reflect with your self, of what Nature and Condition those things are, that minister Delight, or are useful and beneficial to you, or that you have a natural tenderness for: And that these Reflections may answer their End, make them familiar, by beginning at the slightest and most inconsiderable things, and so rising to the higher and more valuable. For instance; if you are fond of an Earthen Cup, consider it is but Earthen Ware, and you cannot be much troubled or surpris'd, when ever it happens to be broke. And if you be fond of a Child or a Wife, consider that these are of Humane, that is, of a Frail and Mortal Nature; and thus your Surprise and Concern will be the less, when Death takes either of them away from you.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**fter the distinction between things within, and things out of, our own power, and an Advertisement how we ought to esteem each of them: That the former sort only must be looked upon as our own, the latter as Foreign, and in the Disposal of others; he had told us how we ought to be affected with regard to those that fall within our power, to make such of them as are contrary to Reason and Nature, the Object of our Aversion, and to suspend all manner of Desire, for some convenient time: (Which Advice in all probability, is grounded upon the Arguments already mentioned.) But since it is impossible to live without having something of In-  
terest

terest in, and much Dealings with, those things, that are not at the Disposal of our own Will; he now informs us how to converse with them, and tells us, that though they be not at our own pleasure, yet they shall not be able to create to us any manner of Disquiet and Confusion.

And here he takes notice of Three sorts of these External Things; First, Such as can only pretend to please without profiting us at all; for these are they that minister to our Entertainment and Delight. The Second are such as are beneficial and convenient for Use. And the Third, such as we have a particular Affection for, by reason of some natural Relation they bear to us, and what we are tender of, without any regard to our own Benefit and Convenience. And this is a very just and true Distinction; for Pleasure and Profit, and Natural Affection, are the Three things that engage our Hearts; and it is always upon one or other of these Accounts, that we are fond of this Mortal State, and reconciled to all the Hardships and Miseries that attend it.

Now the Entertainments and Diversions that Men are delighted with, differ according to their several Tempers and Inclinations: Some find their pleasure in Plays, and others in Sports and Exercises, in Races, or Tilting, or the like. Others in Dancings, or Tricks of Legerdemain, in Jugglers, or Zany's, or Buffoons. Some again in curious Sight, either the Beauties of Nature, as the Colours of Peacocks, and other fine Birds, pleasant Flowers, and Gardens, and Meadows and Groves: Or in the perfections of Art, as Pictures, and Statues, and Buildings; or the exquisite Workmanship of other Professions. Some value those of the Eye less, and find greater satisfaction in the Entertainment of the Ear, as the Harmony of Vocal and Instrumental Musick; and, which is a Pleasure more generous and improving, in Eloquence or History; and sometimes in Fables and Romances.

mances. For that these contribute much to our Delight, is plain from that fondness, which all of us naturally have to Stories, from our very Childhood.

The Second sort, which tend to our Use and Benefit, are likewise various: Some contribute to the improvement of the Mind, as a Skilful Master, Virtuous Conversation, Instructive Books, and the like: Some are serviceable to the Body, as Meats and Cloathes, and Exercise: Some regard only our Fortune, as Places of Authority, Lands and Tenements, Money and Goods, and the like.

But the Third sort we have a Natural Tenderness for, without any prospect of Advantage from them; and these are recommended to our Affection by some common tie of Nature and Affinity between us; and in this Relation stand our Wives and Children, our Kindred, our Friends, and our Countrymen.

Now the Advice given, with respect to every one of these, is, that we would sit down, and seriously consider, what the Nature and Condition of each of them is; what Hazards and Uncertainties they are liable to; that they are subject to Corruption and Decay; that the Enjoyment of them is short, and not to be depended upon; and that none of them are absolutely at our own Pleasure and Disposal. For such a Reflection as this, that suggests to us continually what their Nature and Circumstances are, is no other, than a Meditating upon the Loss of them. And such a Meditation would render the thing easie and familiar to us; and when any Accident of this kind befalls us, would prevent all that Surprise, and Confusion, and extravagant Concern, which the Unthinking part of the World are oppressed with upon such Occasions. And indeed the case here, is the very same with several other Instances, wherein we find, that the Troubles and Pains of Body and Mind both, though very grievous at first and



and in themselves, yet grow much more supportable by Custom and Use.

To this purpose, the next Words give us very good Counsel; to begin at first with little matters; nay, not only with little, but with the least and most inconsiderable; for according to the old Greek Proverb, \* *The Potter must try a Cup, before he can make a Jar.*

\* Εὐ μὲν πῶν  
μαγεύειν. Eras.  
Adag. Pag. 227.

He that undertakes the biggest first, is presently worsted, proves unsuccessful, spends his Strength to no purpose, and gives out in utter Despair. But he that sets out leisurely, and begins with small and easie Trials, grows stronger and bolder with his good Success, and by gaining Ground upon what was a Match for him before, advances more surely, and conquers still greater and greater Difficulties. Thus a Man that hath been used to Four Meals a day, if he attempt all on the sudden to fast a whole Day together, will find the Change too violent for his Body to bear, and never get through the trouble and pain of it. And this force upon Nature is the Reason, why such warm Undertakings are generally of dangerous consequence, and just only for a spurt and away. But if such a one abate of his former indulgence by degrees, first take himself down to Three Meals, and when this Proportion is grown habitual and easie, then allow himself but Two: Thus it will be very feasible; and afterwards he may, without any great trouble, come to content himself with one; and such a Change will be infinitely more safe, and more likely to continue.

To apply this now by the instance before us: If we consider those things that are dear to us upon the account of their Usefulness and Convenience; and from such among them as are of least Consequence and Value, acquaint our selves with the Condition of all the rest; that their Nature is cor-



ruptible, the Enjoyment of them uncertain, and the Loss of them what we have reason to expect every Moment: As in an Earthen Pot, which can have nothing but its Usefulness to incline us to value it; we are to remember it is of a brittle substance, and dashed to pieces with the least Accident. And what can be a poorer and more contemptible instance than this, to begin with? Yet mean and trifling as it is, a Man that lays a good Foundation here, and rises by degrees to Matters of greater concern, shall be able at last to encounter his Affection for a Child; and not only in meer speculation, and empty formal Words to say it, but to make his whole Behaviour speak, and all the Dispositions of his Mind shall carry the impression of this wise and seasonable Reflection, That what he thus dotes upon, is but a Man; if a Man, consequently a brittle and frail Creature, and what he is in a continual possibility of losing. And when his Mind is once thoroughly possess'd with this Consideration, and confirmed with an habitual recollection of it, whenever that Child is snatch'd away from him, he is prepared for the Stroke, and cannot be surpris'd and confounded with Passion, as if some strange or new thing had happened to him.

And here it is very well worth a Remark, what abundance of Wisdom and Artifice there is in this Management of things; for by it we get a Mastery over those that are not by Nature within our Power, and deal with them as though they were: For the saving my Child from Death, is a thing not in my power; but a due Consideration of his being liable to it, the rendring this Consideration familiar and easie to me, and living in expectation of it, as a thing no less natural and likely than his Life; the not being disturbed if he do Die, and the behaving my self with such evenness of Temper, as if he were not dead: These are in our power: And which is a  
great

great deal more, they do in effect bring the very Accident of his Death, which is of itself not so, within it too. For a Man thus compos'd, may say, *My Child is not Dead to me*; or, to speak more truly and properly, *Though he be Dead, yet I am still the same Man, as if he were still alive.*

I only observe farther, That the Instances produced here by *Epictetus*, are fetched from the Two latter sorts of Things; such as are useful and beneficial to us, and such as Nature and Affinity gives us a more than ordinary tenderness for: And these were prudently chosen, with an intent, I presume, to intimate, that those things which are for Entertainment and Diversion, and can only pretend to please without profiting us, are so very mean and despicable, as to deserve no consideration at all, from Persons that have made any tolerable advances in the study of Wisdom and Virtue.

## CHAP. IX.

*In every Action you undertake, consider first with your self, and weigh well the Nature and Circumstances of the thing: Nay, though it be so slight a one, as going to Bathe; represent to your self beforehand, what Accidents you may probably meet with. That in the Bath there is often Rude Behaviour, Dashing of Water, Jostling for Passage, Scurrilous Language, and Stenling. And when you have done thus, you may with more Security go about the thing. To which purpose you will do well to say thus to your self; My Design is to Bathe, but so it is too, to preserve my Mind and Reason undisturbed, while I do so. For after such wise preparation as this, if any*

*thing intervene to obstruct your Washing, this Reflection will presently rise upon it: Well, but this was not the only thing I propos'd; that which I chiefly intended, is to keep my Mind and Reason undisturbed; and this I am sure can never be done, if I suffer every Accident to discompose me.*

### COMMENT.

**A**FTER giving Instructions concerning our Behaviour, with regard to the things of the World, that use to engage our Affections, either upon the account of the Delight they give us, the Convenience they are of, or the Relation they bear to us; the next Step in order, is to consider our Actions; for these too have a great many Circumstances, that lie out of our power, and must therefore be undertaken with great Prudence, and much Preparation. The Rule then that he lays down is this, That you take a just account of the nature of each Action, and fairly compute the several Accidents, which, though they do not necessarily, yet may possibly attend it, and to expect that these are very like to happen in your own case particularly. And the Fruit of this will be, either not to be surpris'd, if such Difficulties do encounter you; or, if the thing be not of absolute necessity, to decline the hazard, by letting it alone. For the Great *Cato* reckons this for one of the Errors of his Life, that he chose to take a Voyage once by Sea, to a Place whither he might have travell'd by Land. Now in such a case, though no misfortune should actually happen, yet if there be a likelihood of any such Accident, and if it do frequently happen to others, it is an Act of Imprudence to make choice of such a Course, without being driven to it by necessity: And this Answer, that many People do the same, and come off safe, will  
not

not bear us out, in choosing a more dangerous, when it is left to our own Liberty to take a safer Passage.

But now, where there is absolute occasion for our running some Risk, as if we have necessary Affairs to dispatch, which require a Voyage to or from some Island; or if we are obliged to stand by a Father, or a Friend, in some hazardous or unlucky Business; or if we are called upon to take up Arms in defence of our Country: Then there is no thought of declining the Matter wholly, and our Method must be to undertake it upon due deliberation; and, after having first laid together the several accidental Obstructions that use to arise in such a case: That so by this timely Recollection, we may render them easie and familiar, and not be disturbed, when any of them come upon us. For a Man thus prepared, hath this double Advantage; if they do not happen, his Joy is the greater, because he had so fully possess'd himself with an expectation that they would, that it is almost a Deliverance to him. And if they do, then he hath the advantage of being provided against them, and so can encounter them, without much danger or disorder.

Now against this Counsel I expect it will be urged, First, That if any one should take such Pains to represent all the Crosses and Disappointments that may probably happen to them in every Undertaking, the Effect of this would be Cowardice and Idleness; for Men would find themselves utterly discouraged from attempting any thing at all. Besides, that nothing can be more grievous to any Man, than to have the Image of his Troubles and Misfortunes constantly before his Eyes; and especially, if the Affair he be engaged in, continue any time, to converse all that while with this gasty Apparition. Therefore, that *Demosthenes* his Advice seems much more Prudent and Eligible; To be sure that what you attend, be Good and Vertuous; then to

hope well, and whatever the Success be, to bear it generously and decently.

But by the Objector's good leave, if by hoping well, *Demosthenes* mean a good Confidence, grounded upon our undertaking what is Vertuous and Commendable, and a resting satisfied in this Consideration, whatever the Event be, he says the very same thing with *Epictetus*; only indeed he gives us no Direction, which way we shall attain to this generous Temper of Mind, that may enable us to entertain the Dispensations of Providence decently, though they should happen to be harsh and severe. But *Epictetus* declares himself of Opinion, that the Method to qualify our selves for so doing, is to take a true Prospect of the whole Affair, and represent to our selves, that it is what is fit for us to undertake, and that there may be several Circumstances attending it, which though they may not be agreeable to us, are yet very tolerable, and such as we may reconcile our selves to, upon these Two Accounts. First, Because the Action itself which brings them upon us, is Vertuous and Becoming; and then, because whenever they happen, they are no more than what are expected, and were provided against before.

But, if by hoping well, *Demosthenes* intend a firm perswasion of Safety and Success, then I think it is very difficult, nay, I may venture to say, it is impossible to conceive, how a Man thus perswaded, can ever bear Disappointments and Crosses with Moderation and Temper. For when a Man falls from what he was in imagination, the shock is the same, as if he were so in reality. And neither the Body, nor the Mind, are of a Constitution to bear sudden and violent Alterations, without great Disturbance. You see that the very Weather, and Seasons of the Year, though they change gently and by degrees, yet put our Humours into a great ferment, and generally occasion many Distempers among us; and the

the more Violent this Change at any time is, the Greater in Proportion the Disorders that follow upon it, must needs be.

Nor is it true, that a just Computation of all the Difficulties and Dangers that are used to attend our Actions, must needs condemn Men to Slavish Fears, and an Unactive Life: For if our Reason convince us, that what we attempt, is good for the advantage of the Soul, or (which is all one) of the Man, (for that Soul is the Man,) the Desire of that Good must needs inspire us with Courage and Vigour, notwithstanding all the discouraging Dangers that attend it. And the consideration of this danger, will be very much softened by this most Rational and Vertuous Perswasion, that we ought to persevere in such an Undertaking, though at the expence of some Hazard and Inconvenience. For all Danger and Detriment, that concerns either our Body or our Fortunes, is not properly an Evil to us; nor shall we think it ours, if we be wise. But the Benefit of choosing a Vertuous Action, and persisting in it, in despite of all Dangers and Discouragements, is our own Good; for it is the Good of our Souls, which are truly and properly our selves. And this Advantage is considerable enough to be set against many Troubles, and Losses, and Banishments, and Disgraces; nay, it is sufficient, not only to be set against, but to over-balance them all; because the Good of this does so very much exceed the Evil that seems to be in them. For if a Man think himself obliged to choose a Greater Good, when attended only with a Less Evil, how is it possible that he should be discouraged and uneasy, under the expectation of some cross Accidents that sometimes follow upon Vertuous Actions, when the Good of these Actions is truly and properly his own, but the Evil of those Accidents, is only something remote, and not His? Especially too, when this is by no means

means a superficial and notional Distinction, but such a real Difference, as his whole Practice and Behaviour shews him sensible of. This is the very Reason, that Men of Vertue and Wisdom have made it their Glory to choose Good with the greatest Dangers; that they have done it chearfully, and sacrificed their very Lives for it; and accounted their Sufferings upon such an Account, matter of the greatest Joy to them. So did \* *Menaceus* particularly, and all those other Heroes, famed in Story, who have voluntarily devoted themselves, and died for the Service and Sake of their Country.

Now *Epictetus* couches his Advice here, under one of the Meanest and most Insignificant Instances that can be; partly to illustrate what he says, by an Example taken from common Conversation, and so to gain the Assent of his Hearers, to the truth of what he would infer from it; and partly too, as himself hath told us before, to put his Scholats upon exercising their Vertue in Lesser Trials; that so from Trivial Matters, they may rise by degrees to others of greater Difficulty and Consequence. And the Success of this Method hath been already shewn to depend upon Reasons, which need not be repeated here. But his Design is also, that we should be careful to apply these things to Affairs of Moment, in proportion as the Hazards of them are more discouraging; and in those Occasions, always to take our Measures from the Nature of the thing, whether it be what is agreeable to Decency and our Duty, and what those Hardships are that usually accompany it:

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\* This Person was Son to *Creon*, King of *Thebes*, and upon an Answer of the Oracle, that a Plague which then infested the City, could not be removed, till the Race of *Cadmus* were all extinct: He, who was the only remainder of that Family, slew himself. Of the same nature was that Act of *Curtius*, and the *Decii* so much celebrated by the *Roman* Poets and Historians.

And,



And, after such Prospect taken, to settle our Minds in this Resolution, that if the worst happen, yet we will bear it with Temper and Moderation. For this is the way to maintain the Character of Virtuous and Rational Men; this must let us into all the Advantages of doing well, and defend us from all that Perplexity that unexpected Events commonly betray Men to. For he that is troubled and Discomposed, and fancies himself unhappy in what he suffers, it is plain, either had not sufficiently considered what he went about, before he engaged in it; or if he did foresee all this, then his Disorder is the Effect of Effeminacy and Cowardice, which makes him give out, and repent his Undertaking. And both these Failings are highly Criminal, and contrary to the Rules of Nature, and Right Reason.

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## C H A P. X.

*That which gives Men Disquiet, and makes their Lives Miserable, is not the Nature of Things as they really are, but the Notions and Opinions which they form to themselves concerning them. Thus even Death, which we look upon as the most perplexing and dreadful, hath in truth, nothing of Terror in it: For if it had, Socrates must needs have feared it as much as we. But our Opinion that it is Evil, is the only thing that makes it so. Therefore, whenever we meet with Obstructions and Perplexities, or fall into Troubles and Disorders, let us be Just, and not lay the blame where it is not due; but impute it all to our own Selves, and our prejudicate Opinions.*



## C O M M E N T.

WE were told before, what Means would be Proper and Effectual for the preserving an Even and Composed Temper of Mind, in the midst of all those Hardships that frequently attend our best Actions. That this might be accomplished by the Power of Premeditation; by representing these Inconveniences, as sure to happen; and when we had made the worst of it, convincing our Selves, that such Actions were worth our Undertaking, even with all those Incumbrances. Now that Rule proceeded upon the Work of our own Minds, but there is another here, fetch'd from the Nature of the Things themselves, and the Consideration of those Difficulties and Dangers that use to give us Disturbance. And here he changes his Method, and confirms what he says, not by some slight and trivial Instances, as he did before, but by Death, the greatest and most confounding one to Humane Nature that can be. For if the Argument hold good in this case, it must needs be a great deal stronger with regard to all the rest, which are, by our own Confession, less dismal and affrighting.

To this purpose then he tells us, That those Things which we apprehend to be Evil, and which for that Reason discompose our Spirits, because we think our Selves miserable under them, are really neither Evil themselves, nor the true Causes of any Evil to us: But that all our Troubles and Perplexities are entirely owing to the Opinions which we our Selves have entertained concerning them.

For Proof of this Determination, he produces that, which, of all the Things that we apprehend as Evil, is confessedly the greatest and most terrible; and shews, that even Death, nay a violent and untimely Death, is yet no Evil. The Argument he uses

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is short indeed, but very full and conclusive; the Method and Consequence whereof lies thus. Whatever is Evil in its own Nature, must needs appear so to all Mankind, and especially to those, whose Apprehensions are most improved, and most suitable to the real Nature of Things. Thus all Things that are naturally hot, or cold, or beautiful, or the like, appear such to all People in their right Senses. But Death does not appear Evil to all People, nor are they universally agreed in this Notion of it. (For *Socrates* did not think it so; He chose to undergo it, when it was in his Power to have declined it; He endured it with all the Calmness and Composure imaginable; He spent that whole Day in which he died, with his Friends, demonstrating to them the Existence and Immortality of the Soul, and the Efficacy of a Philosophical Life, in order to Vertue and Reformation.) From all which Premises, this Conclusion evidently follows; That Death is not in its own Nature evil: And consequently, That our Fears and Troubles concerning it do not come from the Thing it self, but from a disquieting Persuasion of its being evil, with which we possess and disorder our own Minds.

And such a Persuasion there may very well be, tho' there be no Ground for it in the Nature of the Thing. For Honey is not bitter, and yet Men in the Jaundice, that have their Palates vitiated, from a constant Bitterness occasioned by the overflowing of the Gall, are prejudiced against it, as if it were so. Now, as the only way to bring these Persons to discern Tastes as they really are, is to carry off that Redundancy of Choler which corrupts their Palate; so in this Case, we must remove the Distemper of the Mind, correct our Notions of Things, and make a right Judgment of what is really Good and Evil to us, by just Distinctions between Things that *Are* and Things that *Are Not* in our own Power; what is properly ours, and what belongs not to us. For, according to this Rule,

Rule, if Death be none of the Things in our Power, it cannot be evil; and though it should be granted such, with regard to the Body; yet if it do not extend to the Soul, nor do that any Harm, it cannot be evil to Us.

*Plato* indeed, or *Socrates* as he is introduced by *Plato*, goes a great deal farther, and boldly affirms, that it is Good, and much to be preferred before this Life that we lead in the Body; and this, not only to some Persons, and in some Circumstances, as Men may be better or worse; but in general, and without Exception, to all. For thus *Socrates* expresses himself in his *Phædon*; *It may possibly surprize you, and seem a strange Paradox, That this should be the only Accident, that is good at all Times, and without any Reserve; but yet so it is. In all other Cases, nothing happens to a Man, which, as his Circumstances may alter, he might not at another time better be without: But no Time, no Circumstance whatsoever, can render it more for a Man's Advantage to Live than to Dye. And Plato, in his Book concerning Laws; speaking in his own Person, delivers himself to this purpose: If I may be allowed to speak my Opinion freely, it is really my Judgment, That the Continuation of Soul and Body together, upon no Consideration, ought rather to be chosen, than the Separation and Dissolution of them.*

Now *Epictetus*, 'tis true, hath drawn his Argument from that, which is generally esteemed the most formidable Evil that we are capable of suffering: But however, since most of us, when we lye under the present Smart of any Calamity, straitway imagine it worse than Death (for what can be more usual, than for People in Pain, and very often in no great Extremity of it neither, to wish for Death to deliver them from it, and when reduced to Poverty, to tell us they had much rather be Dead than live in Want?) upon this Account, we may apply *Epictetus's* Argument to these Instances also.

As to Pain, What Degree of it is there so violent, that Men, nay even those of low and vulgar Spirits, are not content to go through, to cure a dangerous Disease? They do not only Endure, but Chuse and Pay for it: They thank their Physicians for putting them to Torture, and look upon Cutting and Burning, as Acts of the greatest Tenderneſs and Friendſhip. Now, though this make it pretty plain, that Men, who are well pleaſed to purchaſe Life ſo dear, muſt needs be of Opinion, that no Pain is ſo terrible to Humane Nature as Death; yet the principal Uſe I would make of this Obſervation is, to ſhew, that Men can really ſuffer with great Patience and Reſolution; can harden themſelves againſt what they count very dreadful, and meet it with a compoſed Countenance; when once they are perſuaded, that the enduring it will be for their Advantage. What prodigious Inſtances of Patience were the *Lacedemonian* Youths, who endured Scourgings ſo barbarous, as almoſt to expire under the Rod, and all this, merely for a little Oſtentation and Vain-glory? Now this, it is evident, they did not out of any Compulſion, but freely and cheerfully; for they offer'd themſelves to the Tryal, of their own Accord. And the Reaſon why they held out ſo obſtinately, was, not that their Senſe of Pain was leſs quick and tender than other People's, (though more hard'ned too than People that indulge themſelves in Effeminacy and Eaſe) but becauſe they thought it their Glory and their Vertue to ſuffer manfully and reſolutely.

For the ſame Reaſon, *Epiſtetus* would tell you, that Poverty is no ſuch formidable Thing neither, becauſe he can produce the Example of *Crates* the *Theban* to the contrary; who, when he diſpoſed of all he was worth to the Publick, and ſaid,

*Let*

*Let others keep or mourn lost store,  
Crates own Hands make Crates poor,*

That Moment put an End to his Slavery, and his Freedom commenced from the time he had disburdened himself of his Wealth. Now the manifest Consequence of all this is, That nothing of this kind is terrible and insupportable in its own Nature, as we fondly imagine; so far from it, that there may be some Cases, when such things are much more eligible, and better for us: I mean, when they are converted to higher and more excellent Purposes for our own Selves; by tending to the Advantage and Improvement of the Reasonable Soul.

The only Expedient to retain an Even Temper in the midst of these Accidents, is, to possess our Minds with just Notions of them; and the regulating of these Notions is in our own Power: consequently, the preventing those Disorders, that proceed from the Want of such a Regulation, is in our own Power too. And one great Advantage to Persons thus disposed will be, the Learning how to manage those Things that are not at our Disposal, as though they were. For if it be not in my Power to prevent Defamation or Disgrace, the Loss of my Goods or my Estate, Affronts and violent Insults upon my Person; yet thus much is in my Power, to possess my self with right Apprehensions of these Things; to consider them, not only as not Evil, but sometimes the Instruments and Occasions of great Good. Now such an Opinion as this, makes it almost the same Thing to a Man, as if they did not happen at all; or, which is all one, makes him think himself never the Worse, but sometimes the Better for them, when they do. And I take it for granted, that every Wise Man will allow it more for Our, that is, for the Soul's Honour and Advantage, to have behaved our Selves gallantly

ly under Afflictions, than never to have been afflicted at all: And the greater these Afflictions were, the greater still in Proportion, is the Honour and Advantage gained by them. For, as to Bodies that are able to bear it, the violentest Motions exercise them best, and make greatest Improvements of Health, and Strength, and Activity; so the Mind too, must be put upon sharp Tryals sometimes, to qualifie it for suffering gallantly, when any Accident gives us an Occasion. And this may be accomplish'd these two Ways: By getting a right Notion of them; and, By being well prepared against them: which is to be done, partly, by accustoming the Body to Hardship, which indeed is of general use, and hath enabled even Ignorant and Ill Men to slight Blows, and other Pains, which we commonly think intolerable; and partly too, by fixing the Mind in a provident Forecast, and distant Expectation of them. And all these Things we may certainly do, if we please.

Now, if neither Death, nor any of those Things we dread most, have any Thing that is formidable in their own Nature; it is plain, neither They, nor the Persons that inflict them, are the Cause of our Trouble; but we our Selves, and our own Opinions, bring this upon our selves. When therefore the Mind feels it self perplexed with Grief, or Fear, or any Passion, the Blame is our own; and nothing but our Opinions are accountable for such Disorders.

*None but Ignorant and Undisciplin'd People tax others with their Misfortunes. The Young Proficient blames himself; but the Philosopher indeed blames neither others nor himself.*

The Connexion of this with what went before, is so close, that if a Conjunction were added, and we read it thus, *For none but Ignorant and Undisciplin'd*  
Q
People

*People tax others with their Misfortunes*, it had given a very good Reason why we should never lay our Troubles, or Fears, or Disorders, or any other Calamity we fancy our Selves in, to any Thing, or any Bodies Charge, but our own. Since this Way of proceeding, he says, comes from want of being taught better. And then to this Character of the Ignorant and Undisciplin'd, he adds that of One who is a Beginner only in Philosophy, and one who hath attained to a Mastery in it.

The Perfect Philosopher never thinks any Thing, that befalls him, Evil, nor charges any Body with being the Occasion of his Misfortunes, because he lives up to the Dictates of Nature and Reason, and is never disappointed in his Pursuits and Desires, nor ever overtaken with his Fears.

He that is but Raw and Unfinish'd, does indeed sometimes miss of his Desires, and falls into the Mischiefs he would flee from, because the brutish Inclinations move too strongly in him at such times. And when this happens, the first Elements he learn'd, which taught him to distinguish Things *In* and *Out* of our Power, teach him too, That he himself, and none but he, is the true Cause of all his Disappointments, and all his Disasters. And the Occasion of them all was his mistaking the Things without us, and placing a Man's proper Good and Evil in them.

But you will say, perhaps, Since this Young Philosopher knows, That our own proper Good and Evil depends upon our own Power and Choice, (and the accusing himself implies that he knows thus much) how comes it to pass, that he takes wrong Measures, and renders himself liable to this Blame? Probably, because the Knowledge of Good and Evil is the first step to be made toward Vertue; this being the proper Act of Reason: But the brutish Appetites do not always presently submit to Reason, nor suffer themselves to be easily reduced and tempered by it; and especially,



especially, where it happens, as it does very often, that Reason is Negligent and Sluggish; and the Irrational Part active, and perpetually in Motion; by which means the Passions gather Strength, and usurp an absolute Dominion. This was the Case of her in the Play;

*Remorse and Sense of Guilt draw back my Soul,  
But stronger Passion does her Pow'rs controul.  
With Rage transported, I push boldly on,  
And see the Precipice I cannot shun.*

So that for some time it is pretty tolerable, if Reason can work upon the Passions, and either draw them by Force, or charm and win them over some softer way: For, when this is done, then the Knowledge of the Intelligent Part is more clear and instructive, and proceeds without any Distraction at all. No wonder therefore, if Men but little trained in Philosophy make some false Steps, while their Passions are not yet totally subdued, and their Reason does not operate in its full Strength. And when they do so, they accuse Themselves only, as having admitted that Distinction of Things in and out of our own Power, though as yet they seem to have but an imperfect Notion of it.

But they that are Ignorant, and absolutely Untaught, must needs commit a World of Errors, both because of that violent Agitation which their Passions are continually in, and of the Ignorance of their rational Part, which hath not yet learn'd to distinguish real Good and Evil, from what is so in appearance only: Nor does it take them off from Brutality, not so much as in Thought only. By Brutality I mean such low and mean Notions, as persuade us, that our Body is properly our Selves, and our Nature; or, which is yet worse, when we think our Riches so, as the Covetous do. Now while we con-



tinue thus ignorant, there are several Accounts to be given for our doing amiss: We do it, because we think all our Good and Evil consists in Things without us; and, not being at all sensible, what is properly the Happiness or Unhappiness of Humane Nature, or whence it proceeds, we fall foul upon other People; and fancy, that they who obstruct or deprive us of those External Advantages we so eagerly pursue, or that bring upon us any of the Calamities we would avoid, are the real Causes of all our Misery. Though in truth, neither those External Advantages which we call Good, nor those Calamities we call Evil, are what we take them for; but, as Circumstances are sometimes ordered, may prove the direct contrary. For our Folly in this case, is just like that of silly Boys, that cannot endure their Masters, but think them their worst Enemies, and the Cause of a World of Misery; but value and love those as their Friends indeed, that invite them to Play and Pleasure.

Thus *Epictetus* hath given a short, but exact Character of these three sorts of Persons. The Perfect Philosophers are guilty of no Miscarriages, for their Understanding is sufficiently accomplished to direct them, and the Irrational Part readily submits to those Directions. So that here is nothing but Harmony and Compliance, and consequently, they have no Body to lay any Misery to the Charge of; for indeed, they cannot labour under any Thing that is truly and properly Misery. They cause none to themselves; for this were a Contradiction to the Perfection of their Wisdom and Vertue; and nothing else causes them any, for they do not suppose any External Causes capable of doing it.

The Ignorant and Untaught err in both these Respects. Neither their Reason, nor their Passions, are rightly disposed. And they lay all their Unhappiness to others, upon an Erroneous Imagination, that  
it

it proceeds from Things without us. And indeed, it is easie and pleasant, and fit for ignorant Wretches, to shuffle off their own Faults from themselves, and throw them upon other People.

The Young Proficient, who hath attained to the first Principles of Wisdom, though he be guilty of some Miscarriages, and fall now and then into Evil, yet he understands wherein it consists, and from whence it is derived, and what it was that first gave Birth to it; and therefore he lays it at the right Door. And these Marks are so distinguishing, that no Man, who makes a wise use of them, can be in danger of confounding these three Classes of Men, the Accomplish'd Philosopher, the Rude and Untaught, and the Young Proficient.

This Metaphor is so much the more warrantable and pertinent, from the Resemblance, which Education bears to the Management of our Selves: For this is properly the Training up of a Child under the Care and Correction of a Master. Our Sensual Part is the Child in us, and, like all other Children, does not know its own Good, and is violently bent upon Pleasure and Pastime. The Master that has the Care of it, is our Reason; this fashions our Desires, prescribes them their Bounds, reduces and restrains them, and directs them to that which is best for them. So that the Ignorant and Untaught live the Life of a Child left to himself, run giddily on, are perpetually in Fault, as being heady and heedless, and minding nothing, but the gratifying their own Inclinations; and so these Men never think themselves to blame. The Young Proficients have their Master at hand, Correcting and Instructing them; and the Child in them is pretty towardsly, and begins to submit to Rules. So that if these Men are at any time in the wrong, they are presently sensible who hath been to blame, and accuse no body but the Offender himself. But the Perfect and Accomplish'd

Philosophers are such, whose Master keeps a constant Eye upon them, and hath conquered the Child's stubborn and perverse Spirit. So that now he is corrected, and improved, and hath attained to the Perfection he was intended for; that is, the being observant to the Master, and absolutely at his Direction. For the proper Vertue of a Child is this Readiness to receive and to obey Instructions.

## C H A P. XI.

*Suffer not your self to be exalted with any Excellence that is not properly your own. If your Horse should be transported with his Beauty, and boast of it, this were tolerable in him: But when you value your self, and brag of his Beauty, consider, That you are not proud of any Excellence in your self, but in your Horse. You will say then, What is a Man's own? I answer, A right Use of his Idea's. And when you manage these as you ought, then you may be allowed to please your self. For this is being exalted with some Excellence that is properly yours.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE foregoing Chapters acquainted us, what Method must be taken to deliver our selves from Grief, and Fear, and Confusion, when any calamitous Circumstances from without threaten our Peace: This directs us how to preserve an Even and Composed Mind when any External Advantages would shake our Moderation. Now these Advantages he calls *None of Ours*, in Agreement with what he

he said at the Beginning of his Book, *That the Things out of our Power are Feeble, and Servile, and liable to Opposition, and not Ours, but Another's.* And upon the being conscious to our Selves of any such seeming Advantages, he forbids us to be exalted.

By this Exakation, I understand here, not any Insolence, or Haughtiness, or Arrogance of Humour, as the Word is sometimes used in an ill Sense; (for sure we are not allowed to be exalted in such a manner as this, upon the account of any Advantage whatsoever, though never so real a Good, though never so truly our own,) but, as I apprehend, this Exaltation signifies, the being satisfied with our selves; and imagining, that we are Better or Happier upon the account of some additional Good, which now we have, but had not formerly: So that he says, we must not think our selves ever the better for that Good which belongs not to us, nor imagine, that anothers Excellence adds any thing to ours. For every Good belongs to its own proper Subject in which it subsists, and whose Quality it is, and no other can pretend to any right in it. The Goodness, for instance, of a Horse, belongs to the Horse himself, and not to us; for if he be Bold, and Fleet, and Manageable, he hath indeed the proper Excellences of a Horse; but which way does this make for our Commendation? How is this the Excellence of a Man? Or what augmentation can the Vertue or the Happiness of his Owner receive from it?

Yes, you'll say, the Excellence of any Possessions, redounds to the Possessor, and the Goodness of the Instruments, to the benefit of the Artificers that use them. According to the common Opinion of the World, 'tis acknowledged they do. But pray, is the Excellency of an Ax, suppose, able to make Him a good Carpenter, who was not one before? In this case therefore we should distinguish between the Excellencies peculiar to the Tool, and those peculiar to the

the Work-man, with relation to the Trade he professes. The proper Excellence of an Ax, is to carry a good Edge, and to be made neat and true; this renders it fit for Service, and for the Work to be cut out by it: For every Instrument is commended by its Work. But this contributes nothing to the Perfection of the Carpenter; for his Excellence, and proper Commendation, consists in observing Proportions, and Rules of Art; and he is judged by this, and not by the Work done by him, because that may happen to fail, from some Defect, either in the Stuff he wrought upon, or the Tools he wrought with, or Twenty other accidental Obstructions.

Well, But what is properly our own Excellence, upon the account of which we may be admitted to look upon our selves as better and happier than we were before? At the beginning of his Book, the first thing he mentioned of this kind, was a *just and true Opinion*; but here he calls it a *right Use and Management of Ideas*; so that *Opinion* in that place, and *Ideas* in this, signifie one and the same thing. For we judge of things by the different Representations of them to our Minds, and those Judgments are sometimes true, and sometimes false. Now the right Management of Ideas is, when what appears to us, agrees exactly with the nature of things themselves; and when we proceed upon these Appearances so, that the Judgments we form upon them, carry nothing in them that is false and inconsistent; as it would be, if we should affirm, that Intemperance is Good, and Temperance Evil.

But the most proper Sense of this Use of Ideas, as Nature and Reason direct, I look upon to be a Desire of those things that are Good, and an Aversion and Detestation of those that are Evil; when we have not only a bare speculative Notion, what is Good, and what is Evil; but desire and pursue that which we think to be Good, and decline and abhor that which

which we think to be Evil. And this may very well be called our own proper Excellence; because the Regulation of our Desires and Aversions, according to Reason and Nature, is always in our own power; though the Exerting these, and making them effectual by outward Acts, is not always so.

And yet it is highly probable, that *Epicetetus* may intend something farther still, by this right use of Ideas; which is, That our Practice and Behaviour should express a constant Conformity to these True Opinions, and Regular Desires. That we should not think it sufficient to declare it our Sense, that Temperance is a Virtue, but should be actually Temperate, and make all our Actions speak the Conceptions of our Mind, and the regularity of our Desires upon this occasion: Not to satisfy our selves with the empty Commendations of Justice, no nor with a few faint and feeble Desires of this Virtue; (for this is what follows of course, and whatever we apprehend as Good, we cannot but apprehend as Desirable too at the same time,) and yet allow our selves in Acts of Injustice. This is the Case of Impotent and Incontinent Persons; they desire Virtue, but that Desire is overborn by a stronger, which inclines to Pleasure. Their Reason discerns what should be done, though not so clearly and powerfully as it might and ought, and for a while stands up in its Vindication; and the Vertuous Desires and Aversions, which are rightly disposed, but weak and confused, strike in, and take its part; but presently the Brutish Inclinations, like an Impetuous Torrent, bear down all before them, distract and divert the Man from his cooler purposes, and drive him to do what is most agreeable to his present heat. This is just the Description I gave before of *Medea*, when the Tragedian brings her in with these Words, which I have so oft had occasion to repeat.

*Remorse and sense of Guilt pull back my Soul,  
But stronger Passion does her Pow'rs controul.  
With Rage transported, I rush boldly on,  
And see the Precipice I cannot shun.*

So then, it is by no means sufficient, that a Man's Judgment is rightly informed, and that his Desires are vertuously inclined in many Instances, unless he be all of a piece; unless he take care, that the Commendableness of his Practice hold correspondence with the Truth of his Opinions. This is the right and best use of our Ideas, and this we may think our own peculiar Excellence, but no External Advantage can ever be so. For, as the particular Commendation of a Carpenter, considered as a Carpenter, is his working according to the Rules of Art and Proportion: so the peculiar Excellence of a Philosopher, depends upon the Ideas and Affections of his Mind being Just and Good; and the Exerting this Excellence, is the calling these out into act, and demonstrating them to the World by a Vertuous Conversation.

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## C H A P. XII.

*As when a Ship lies in Port, and you go out for  
Fresh Water, you happen to meet with Shell-Fish,  
or Sallads upon the Coast; this is an accidental  
Advantage, and beside your main purpose; but  
still your Thoughts must be fixed upon the Ship,  
and it should be your great care to attend the  
Master's Call; that so when he gives you the  
Signal, you may quit all readily, and not be  
bound, and carried away by Violence, as Sheep  
must*



*must be served: So here in the Affairs of the World, if it be your Fortune, instead of Fish or Sallad, to light upon a Beloved Wife or Child, which give an agreeable relish to Life, none of these Matters must be suffered to detain you. But when the Master gives you the Signal, all must be left, and the best of your Way made to the Ship. But if you are in Tears, be sure you never stir far from the Ship, for fear you be out of the way when the Master calls.*

## C O M M E N T.

**H**E hath by a Short, but Ingenious Discourse, endeavoured to draw us off from the pursuit of those External Advantages, upon which we are used to set so great a value, by shewing us, that all these things are neither in our Disposal, nor any such Happiness, as can be properly called Ours. But now, lest this Argument of his should be so far mistaken, or wrested beyond its true purpose, as to be thought to debar us of Marriage, and other innocent Enjoyments and Satisfactions, and absolutely to forbid us the having any thing at all to do with the World and its Advantages; he acquaints us in the next place, what things those are which he allows the Enjoyment of, and with what Limitations we ought to enjoy them, *viz.* That we should leave our Selves and Them at the Disposal of God, and resign all to his Providence, without Reserve; and then, in such an Humble Dependence as this is, to use and value them moderately, and as they deserve. That our Concern is due in the greatest Measure, to the Necessities of Life, and such as Humane Nature cannot subsist without; which *Epictetus* here hath expressed, by a Ship's Watering, meaning by this, Food, and Raiment, and Dwelling,  
and



and such other things, as they who look no farther than just needful Supplies, satisfie themselves withal. These things therefore are allowed to be a part of our Care, provided it be but in the Second place, and with subordination to a Higher Good.

As for such things as are not absolutely necessary, but only the Conveniencies of Life, as a Wife, Children, Estate, and the like, these he calls *Accidental Advantages*, and *beside our main purpose*; and therefore they are allowed the Third Place in our Esteem. When a Bountiful Providence bestows these upon us, we are to receive and use them seasonably; but be sure to keep our Mind ever fixed upon our Chief and most Desirable Good. But as for Pleasures, and Riches, and Honours, and Preferments, and such other Impertinencies, he will not so much as admit these into the number of his Accidental Advantages, but supposes them inconsistent with a strictly Rational and Virtuous Conversation. For these are what, he told us before, must be wholly laid aside: But the Enjoyments of Marriage, and such other Conveniencies of Humane Nature, he advised to have suspended for a time only, while Men were Young and Unexperienced in the Study of Vertue, that so their first Beginnings might meet with no Interruption, but take good Root, and fasten upon the Mind. And for this Reason, when Men have made some progress, and are arrived to such a degree of Perfection, as may qualifie them to use these with safety, then he allows them to enjoy them, provided still it be in the quality of an Additional Advantage, and not a Principal Design.

Now the Allusion he hath made use of for this purpose, seems to be exceeding proper and pertinent; for the old Moralists in their Fables, have commonly chosen the Sea to represent this Mortal State. The Roughness of its Waves, its frequent Ebbs and Floods, the Tempestuous Weather to which it lies exposed,  
and

and the suffocating all that sink into it, do abundantly justify the Metaphor. By the Ship, may be meant, that which unites the Soul to the Body, and brings her into this Mortal State, whether it be Fate, or Fortune, or whatever else you will please to call it. The Master of this Ship is God, who governs and disposes all things, and commands the Souls into their respective Bodies, according as his own Infinite Wisdom and tender Care sees fit, and in proportion to their own Deserts. The bringing this Ship into Port, is the assigning to these Souls their proper Station, and Country, and Family; by vertue whereof, some are born in one Climate and Nation, and some in another. Some are descended from Great and Noble Families, and others meanly born; some of Vertuous or Healthful Parents, and others of Vicious and Diseased ones. The going out for fresh Water, is the Care we take for supplying the Necessities of Nature, without which, it is impossible that Life should be supported: And indeed, what is there in this state of Mortality of such general use? what that we can so little want, both for the making of our Meat and Drink, as Water? What is intended by gathering Sallads, or Shell-fish by the by, himself hath very elegantly informed us, by instancing in a Wife, and an Estate; and acquainting us withal, that when Providence is pleased to bestow them upon us, we are not to refuse them; but so neither are we to receive or value them, as either the principal and most desirable Goods, or indeed such as are properly ours. For the First and Chief Good is that Disposition of Mind, that is ever obedient to the Master of the Ship, ever attentive to his Call. Nor must we lay our selves out upon these Matters, as we were allowed to do upon Water, or necessary things; but look upon them as additional Comforts only, and such as help to make Life easie and convenient. Now if this Master call us to the Ship, and give order for our returning back to Himself,

self, and to that which is our True, our Native Country, *make the best of your way*, (says he) *to the Ship*; leave every thing that relates to this Mortal Life, be ready to obey his first Orders, and do not loiter, or hanker upon any thing behind, for fear, when Nature cuts the Cable, your Inclinations still be left on Shore. Go you must, that's most certain, and therefore it is that he tells you, if you do not follow readily and chearfully, and quit all of your own accord, you shall be tied Neck and Heels, like Sheep, and thrown under Hatches; that is, you shall be forced, and torn away, and thrust out of the World, like those Foolish and Sheepish Wretches, that dye with Cowardice, and Reluctancy, and Unmanly Lamentations of themselves and their Friends.

But there is yet another Caution observable here, which is, That the Person, to whom the Enjoyment of Marriage, and such others, as are the additional Advantages of Life, are allowed, must be sure to indulge himself in such Enjoyment of them only, as is seasonable; that so, when he hath taken as much of these as is fit for him, he may remove without any delay, and readily comply with the Masters First Call. But if a Man be Old, and draws near his End, he will do best to keep himself wholly disengaged, and entertain himself with nothing so much as the constant Thought and Expectation of the Ship's Sailing, and his quitting the Shore, for fear, when the time of his Return comes, and the Master calls, he be retarded by his Burden, and fastned down to Land; and be forced, with a great deal of unbecoming Concern, to leave a Young Wife, and Pretty Children behind. And surely an Old Man, upon all Accounts, hath much greater reason to prepare for leaving the World, than to entertain himself with vain Projects of settling in it.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Trouble not your self with wishing that things may be just as you would have them; but be well pleased they should be, just as they are, and then you will live easie.*

## C O M M E N T.

THE last Chapter instructed us, what External Advantages those are, which we are allowed to partake of, and how we must govern our selves with regard to them; that those which are necessary for the Support of Humane Nature, must be used and valued accordingly; those which are convenient, as Additional Comforts, and only things by the by; but that neither the one, nor the other, must be made our chief aim. Now after the Enjoyment of these things allowed under such Limitations, he proceeds here to direct us by what means we may use and enjoy them, without any Prejudice or Passion; so as to avoid Disquiet, and live always free and easie. The great Obstruction to this is a perpetual Fretfulness of Temper, and repining at whatever happens to us. And this can never be cured, but by one of these Two ways, either that Providence should order all things agreeably to our Humour, or that we should bring our own Humour to be satisfied with whatever Providence thinks fit to order. The former of these, that Providence should appoint every thing just as we would have it, is neither possible for us to bring about, nor would it at all times be for our Advantage, if we could; for it often happens, that we are most eager and fond of those things which are prejudicial to us. Either upon the account of our Ignorance, because we do not see the Nature and Consequences of them; or through the

the predominancy of our Passions, which puts a Bias upon the Judgment, and inclines Reason to comply with the Sensual and Brutish part. So that in effect, there is but one way left to be easie; and that is, to be of so equal, so resigned a Disposition, as to sit down well content with whatever Providence sees good to appoint.

Now this may possibly be censured by some, as an exceeding hard, and indeed an Impracticable Precept, and that no Man can be in good earnest, when he pretends to persuade People, *that they ought to be well pleased, things should be as they are*: For what Man of Common Sense can be so, when he observes the publick and general Calamities of Mankind? Is it possible, that such dire effects of Providence, as Earthquakes, and Inundations, and Fires, and Famines, and Pestilences, and Murrains of Cattel, and Blasting of Fruit; or that the Wicked and Barbarous Insolencies Men are guilty of, to one another, the Ravaging whole Countries, Burning and Sacking of Cities, the Imprisonments and Slaveries, the Murders and Robberies, the Rapine and Violence, and unbounded Lust, that have driven them past all Sense of God and Religion, and utterly destroyed Morality, and Vertue, and Friendship, and Mutual Faith; and have so utterly ruined several Arts and Sciences, which it hath cost many Ages to contrive and bring to maturity, that we have nothing left of some, but the empty Names; and of others, which ought to be look'd upon as the especial Gifts, and immediate Discoveries of Heaven, for the benefit and support of Mankind, such as Physick, and Architecture, and the like, we have no more than some faint Shadows, and imperfect Images remaining; How, I say, is it possible, that these, and many other Calamities, and monstrous Wickednesses, which the present Age is perfectly over-run with, should be matter of Pleasure or Contentment? And who is there that can

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take Satisfaction, shall I say, in seeing, or bearing a part in them? nay, who can so much as endure the very hearing them named, except he be first forsaken of all Humanity, and all Goodness?

Such Doubts as these, which give sometimes great Perplexity, not only to the Weak and Common Man, but to the Thinking and more Accomplished Persons, will receive satisfaction, if either *Epictetus* be allowed to have any Authority in what he says, or the great Governor of all things, be granted to order the World in Wisdom and Justice. For our Piety, and our Advantage, will be sure to terminate in the same Object, as *Epictetus* himself will assure us more fully hereafter.

In answer therefore to the Objection, I say, That if all these deplorable Accidents which the Objector hath given so Tragical an Account of, be really Evil, and such as they are generally esteemed to be, it is not possible, that any Good Man should, without forfeiting that Character, be pleased to have them so; nor could the Providence of Almighty God be acquitted from the Imputation of being the cause of Evil to us; nor could Men ever prevail with themselves, to Honour, or Love, or pay Adoration to such a Deity. For let Men pretend what they will, no Arguments in the World are able to produce these Affections for the Author of Misery and Mischief. It is a Principle rooted in every Creature, as *Epictetus* will shew you, to hate, and decline, and run away from all things that are prejudicial to it themselves, or the cause of other things being so to it. But whatever is for its Benefit, and productive of its Happiness, these things it naturally courts and admires.

Thus much is certain, upon supposition that these Accidents are really Evil; but now, if notwithstanding our dreadful Apprehensions of them, they be in truth no such matter, but rather Good, as conducing very much to some mighty Benefit, and directed to

excellent Purposes; and that, if any Evil do indeed attend these Dispensations, this is what the Nature of the things is no way concern'd in, but that is wholly owing to the Desires and strong Impulses of our own Minds: In this case, it will by no means follow, that he, who is well enough pleas'd all things should be just as they are, is either a Vicious or a Barbarous Man; nor can we, with any colour, charge the Evil we find in the World upon these Occasions, to Almighty God, but must acquit his Providence, and acknowledge it to be infinitely Wise and Good.

Now the Things, in which all these seeming Evils are, and from whence they spring, must be considered in this Condition of Mortality; and undergoing the vicissitudes of Generation and Corruption, either as Bodies or Souls. And of these Souls again, some are Irrational, of the same Date and Duration with the Body; and having none, or but very little peculiar Excellence of their own, their Office and Power extends no farther, than merely the animating those Bodies to which they belong; and therefore all their Motions depend upon, and proceed in Conjunction with their respective Bodies. But other Souls are Rational: These have an inward principle of Motion, and an Essence and Excellence distinct from their Bodies; they move by their own Choice, and are absolute in the disposing their own Desires and Inclinations. Now the Bodies belonging to these, being in their own Nature purely Mechanical, and deriving their Essence from External Causes, are subject to the Motions of Heavenly Bodies, which influence their Generation and Corruption, and the various Alterations through which they pass.

But if we come nearer, and descend to the Immediate and Material Causes, then they are moved and affected by a mutual Operation upon one another. For this is agreeable to all the Reason in the World, that Temporary and Corruptible things, should de-  
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pend upon the Eternal for their Subsistence, and be obedient to their Influences; Mechanical Beings, upon such as are endued with a Faculty of Self-Motion; and those that are contained within others, upon the Ambients that contain them. This is the constant Method and Rule of Nature, that these should follow the others Superior to them, as having no Principle of Motion in themselves, no Faculty of Choosing, no Power of Determining the Desires, or Affections of their Nature; no Merit or Demerit from Choice or Actions, but are only Good or Evil, in respect and proportion to their Causes. Just as the Shadows of Bodies, do not choose their Sides or Shapes as they please, but are necessarily determined by their Causes and their Circumstances, and are never the better or the worse for those Determinations.

Now as to Bodies, whatever Changes they undergo, this Variety can be no Ill to them, whether they be Compound or Simple Bodies: First of all, because it is what the Condition of their Nature hath made them liable to. They are bound in Laws irrevocable, which they may neither controul nor resist, and consequently can receive no Harm by whatever they impose, as having no Power to do otherwise. For Ignorance would be no Evil, nor the most brutish and extravagant Conversation, nor would the Rational Soul be one whit the worse for either, had not Nature endued her with a Faculty of Discerning and Understanding the Truth; and given her a Power over the brutish Appetites, by which she is enabled to subdue and over-rule them.

Secondly, Because the Compound Bodies, which consist of simple Ingredients, that are of contrary Qualities, such as are perpetually struggling with, and usurping upon one another, by Diseases, and Excess of Humours, are sometimes strengthened by throwing off the corrupt Parts; and sometimes by Decay and

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Death are delivered from all that Trouble and Pain, and mutual Strife of contrary Qualities in them. And in this Case, each of the Simples is restored to its primitive Mass, and recovers itself from that Weakness, which was occasioned by this Opposition of contrary Humours. For as each of the Ingredients in Composition made some Impression upon its Opposite, so it likewise continually received some from it, and suffered by it. But now, when the Simples are changed, according to the Changes of the contrary Qualities, they return again to their own primitive Being. Thus Water evaporates into the Air from whence it came, and Air is turned into Fire, from whence it originally was. And I cannot suppose any Evil in Things of this kind, though Inundations, or Fires, or any the most violent Changes in Nature, should be the Effect of these Inequalities, in the Elements that compose the Universe; or though Pestilences and Earthquakes should destroy and dash in pieces the Bodies compounded of those Elements.

But farther, If these Things contribute to some good Effect; if by the infinite Revolutions of Matter and Motion, the Corruption of one Thing produces the Generation of another; how then can the Corruption of any single part be Evil, when at the same time it conduces to the Benefit of the whole? This is a Rule, which Nature itself hath made evident to us, and every particular Creature practises it, in slighting the Advantage of its Parts, in Comparison of the Good of the Whole.

Thus, when any Noxious Humours are redundant in the Body, Nature throwsthem off from the Heart, or Bowels, or Lungs, or Brain, and all the parts that are principally concern'd in the functions of Life, into the Hands, the Feet, the Skin, or any of the Extream Parts; she raises Blisters, and causes Putrefactions, to remove the Humour, and is content to corrupt some parts, for the preservation of the whole.

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This is sometimes, I say, the work of Nature, and when it is not so, we endeavour to supply it by Art. For when Physicians and Chirurgeons draw Sores, and Cup, and Scarify, and Sear, and cut off Limbs to save our Lives, they only imitate Nature, and do that by Medicines, which she was not able to do without them. And yet there is no Wise Man blames these Methods, nor thinks those Pains Evil, which he suffers upon such good Accounts.

From hence it appears, that if Bodies subsisted by themselves alone, and whatever they endured had no relation at all to the Souls of Men, none of the different Changes they undergo, would be esteemed Evil: So that if there be any real Cause for this Complaint, it must be upon the account of the Souls in those Bodies.

Now some of these are Irrational, perfectly of a piece with the Bodies, and no more than the animating part of them. Their Essence, their Power and their Operations subsist in, and depend entirely upon, and are in inseparable Conjunction with, the Body. But Others are Rational, of a Nature superiour to the Body, and distinct from it, acting upon a free Principle of Motion and Choice, a Principle of their own, by which they dispose their own Inclinations and Desires, as they see fit themselves. (All which hath been abundantly proved already.)

Now the Irrational Souls have not the least Sign or Footstep of Free-Agency, no manner of Tendency or Appetite from within, but are only the principle of Life and Activity to the Body; and Consequently their Being was ordained by the same Fate, and is subject to the same Casualties with the Body: They have no Dignity, no Merit or Demerit of their own, but are more or less valuable, according to the Dignity of their respective Bodies, and are as irresistibly disposed to their Motions, as Shadows are to their Substances.

It is true indeed, This is more peculiarly the Condition of Plants, which have only a Vegetative Soul, and want the Sensitive one, and are not exercised with those Motions, that accompany the Desires, and vehement Impulses of the Soul. But Beasts are in a higher Form, and are endued with this also. And therefore the Souls of Brutes, being considered in a middle State, in a Capacity superiour to Vegetables, and yet inferior to such as Nature hath made free Agents, must in all Reason have some Resemblance, some Footsteps at least, of Appetites and Affections arising from within; and such, as shall be moved sometimes in Agreement to the Nature of its particular Species, and sometimes contrary to it: As, when a Lion hath that Courage and Fury agreeable to its kind; and this is sometimes more, and sometimes less, than it ought to be. And in this respect, the Dignities and Degrees of such Souls are different; and their Lives are so too, according to the Disposition which Fate and Nature hath given them; which is such, that they are still moved mechanically, and by external Impressions. For it is necessary, that whatever is placed between two Extremes should in some measure partake of each of those Extremes.

But now the Rational Soul, which is a Free Agent, and hath an absolute Dominion over her own Desires and Propensions, derives its Dignity from Choice; she uses the Body indeed, but hath all its Appetites and Passions at her Devotion. This Soul therefore, when she makes use of the Body, only as an Instrument of Action, and maintains her own Superiority over it, is obstructed in all those Operations, in which the Body bears a part, by the Sufferings and Diseases of the Body, but is not itself at all affected with those Pains. From whence it was, that the great *Socrates* used to say, the Anguish was in the Leg, but not in the Mind. But if the Soul contract too intimate a Familiarity with the Body, and grow fond of it, as if it were no longer its Instrument, but a part of itself,

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or rather its very self, then it communicates in all its Afflictions, degenerates into Brute, and esteems all the Extravagancies of Anger and Desire its own; is enslaved to them, descends to little Trickings, and is eternally contriving how to compass external Objects; and being thus corrupted and diseased, in such manner as a Soul is capable of being diseased, it stands in need of Physick and strong Remedies to cure these Distempers. For it is a Rule in Application, that one Contrary is cured by another. And thus, when the Desire is depraved by Lusciousness and Pleasure, and hath conformed itself to the Body too much, by the Love of Sensual Enjoyments, and Riches, and Honours, and Preferments, and Posts of Authority, and the like; there is a necessity of meeting with Crosses and Disappointments, that so the subsequent Pain, in the very same Instances, may correct and chastise the Excess of Pleasure we formerly took in them. And this is no where more requisite than in Bodily Pains and Pleasures: For this is nearest to the Soul, and its Torments are received with a quicker and more tender Sense than any other. When therefore the Soul hath revolted from her Supreme Commander, and forsakes her own Reason, abandoning herself to the Body and the World; and thinking their Enjoyments and their Happiness her own; and by this means grows vitiated and distempered; there seems no other way to be left of putting her out of Conceit with these Things, and poisoning the Byas that carried her to them, (that so she may despise them, and condemn her self, and return to God and right Reason again, and expect all her Happiness from an Obedience to these) but by making her sensible both of the Evil of her former Courses, and of the Smart that follows them. This only can take off the Propensity to that Pleasure, which she hath felt in and by them. For, so long as she continues to find this, she continues fond of, and fastned down to these

Enjoyments. And no Nail takes faster hold, or fixes Things closer, than Pleasure and the Allurements it brings, do the Soul to the Objects that occasion it. And this is the Reason, why our skilful and tender Physician mingles Bitter with our Sweet, and makes what we are fondest of, to become nauseous and painful to us; he deals with us as Nurses do with sucking Children, and puts Wormwood and Mustard upon the Breast, to wean our Affections, and make us loath Things that are no longer convenient for us.

In such Cases then, the first Choices of our Minds are determined to the less of two Evils; they prefer Death before Bodily Pain and Afflictions, and had rather be quite out of the Body, than miserable in it; a Wish, which no Man would ever make, if he were always easie and prosperous. And thus, by Degrees, we are wrought up to an Hatred and Aversion of present Pleasure, by a Prospect and Dread of a much greater, and more complicated Misery that attends it: As Children are brought off from what is hurtful to them at first by a Principle of Fear: Or a Man, that loves any Meat or Drink prejudicial to his Health, and hath found by Experience, that it gives him Gripings, or is offensive to his Stomach, is content afterwards to forbear the gratifying his Palate, provided that Abstinence will but secure his Ease, and prevent the much more lasting Pains which that short Pleasure uses to bring after it. This is the Case of most of us: For alas! How very few are there that will be content to forego even those Pleasures, which they are satisfied ought not to be indulged, so long as they find no Trouble or Inconvenience from them?

Now the Truth is, This abstaining from Pleasure for fear of some greater Pain, is not so properly the subduing or destroying our Passion, as the exchanging of one Passion for another: For, we are willing to make a saving Bargain, and barter the Pleasure of Enjoyment away for the Pleasure of Ease and Security: And thus

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Passion rises up in Succession to another. But yet this is a very good Method to begin with, while we retain our silly Childish Dispositions, that we may grow jealous and fearful of those Things, to which our Inclinations lead us most; and when this Distaste is once given, then by considering their Nature, and observing, that besides their being Vicious, the very Uneasiness and Troubles that attend them, are more exquisite, and more various, than the Pleasures they afford; and so returning to Reason, and finding that our Happiness is really within our own selves, and expected in vain from the Delights of the Body, or the Advantages of the World; and thus by degrees growing conscious of some Resemblance between us and God, and reverencing his Image in our Souls; we choose a wise and good Life; now no longer out of Fear, but from the more generous Principles of a virtuous and well-instructed Mind. For even Children, when they grow wiser, come at last to decline, and to do those Things, out of Judgment and Inclination, which at first nothing but Fear, and the Rod, could have driven them to.

And this is the Design of our good God, and his tender Care over us, That the Soul should neither cling too fast to the Body and its Pleasures, and the Enjoyments of the World, nor yet abstain from them, when driven only by a Principle of Fear, but from its own free generous Choice, as considering, that all our Good and all our Evil consists in our own Choice, and our own Aversions. So that all the healing Methods of his Providence are directed to no other purpose than this, to restore the Soul to Reason and Prudence, and the Preferring a Virtuous Life. Just as the most eminent Physicians, when they proceed to such smarting Severities as Cutting and Burning, and the like, do it only with a Design to reduce the Body to its natural and healthful Temper, and to enable the Parts that were before obstructed,

to perform their proper Functions again. Now Punishment is the best Cure for Wickedness; and this is the peculiar Use and Benefit of those Calamities, which we account Evils. And, as we are commonly very angry at our Physicians when they torture and put us to Pain; so do Men likewise generally take it ill to have these sharper Remedies of Providence applied to them. But they are only the Childish and Effeminate, the Foolish and Unthinking Part of the World, that do so. For whoever will give himself the Trouble of making a diligent Observation of himself and others, upon Occasion of the several Accidents that befall him; and take Notice of the Dispositions of his Soul, by what Springs they are moved, and how they are corrected and changed, he, I make no question, will readily acknowledge, That Afflictions are generally the first Occasion of Mens conquering their Inclinations, and coming up to a due Contempt of the Body, and the World, or (as our great Author expresses himself) of all those Things that are out of our own Power.

But, as the Physick applied to our Bodies is of two sorts, the One Restorative, the Other Preservative; One to purge off our Diseases, and correct the Noxious Humours by Drugs of contrary Qualities; the Other to continue and confirm Health, by convenient Diet, due *Regimen*, and moderate Exercise: And as some Exercises require great Labour and Activity, and are fit only for hardy and robust Bodies; so this excellent Physician of our Souls, does not only administer to the Sick and Diseased, and recover them by Sufferings and Misfortunes; but he exercises the Sound and Healthful, and by so doing adds to their Strength and Vigour, and renders their Vertue more conspicuous; a Pattern to others, and a Provocation to be good. And this is but necessary; for, the Souls of Men, even the Good and Vertuous, stand in need of Exercise to confirm them, no less than



than healthful Bodies do. And *Hippocrates's* Maxim will hold good upon this occasion too, That Motion gives Strength, but Sloth and Inactivity wastes it. And the Reason is plain; for, those Things which are so ordered, that they are continually as perfect as Nature intended them, and are continually employed in such Operations as Nature appointed for them, perform these Operations with great Readiness and Dexterity. But those that are not thus continually, must imitate and supply the Want of that perpetual Motion, by their own Practice, that so they may not forget by Disuse, and find themselves at a Loss, when any urgent Occasion calls for the exerting their Powers. For whatever is sometimes in, and at other Times out of Motion, confesses its own Weakness, of which this Vicissitude is the Effect, and that Weakness must be worn off, and Strength acquired by Action. Now all Exercise consists in the same Acts frequently repeated; the very same, I say, with that principal Act, for the sake of which we use this Exercise. Thus in the Olympick Sports, the Exercise used to perfect them in Wrestling, is Wrestling very often; and that in order to the *Cassus* and Cuffing, is the inuring themselves to Blows. Thus Men learn the Art of War by imitating Action, and engaging one Party with another, when they train together: And the more lusty and strong the Persons are, that perform these Exercises, the more effectually does this Practice attain its end. So that if any Man would get a Mastery over Pleasure, it is necessary, whenever any entertaining Objects offer themselves, to learn and practise the Contempt of them; and they that would conquer Pain, must use themselves to endure it; and to master our Fears, we must make Danger familiar to us; and to slight Torments, we must imitate the Patience of the Noble *Lacedemonian* Youths, who plaid Prizes of Scourging, and exercised themselves in every Thing that was painful, to qualify



qualifie them for it: Or do as *Salust* in our Times did, that laid a red-hot Coal upon his Thigh, and blow'd the Fire, to try how long he was able to undergo the Smart. For these Tryals, and the principal Actions they are intended to perfect us in, do not differ in Nature and Kind, but in Degree and Duration only, as these are easier and lighter, and may be desisted from at Pleasure.

Since therefore Almighty God, when he disposed of Mens Souls in Mortal Bodies, and assigned them to the Condition in which we live at present, endued them with Faculties capable of managing every Accident, (so as to receive no Injury either from the enticing Pleasures, or from the Terrors and Disasters of the World) and of setting the Mind above them all; the same infinite Wisdom keeps those Faculties in Exercise, that they should not grow sluggish, and consequently feeble, and slack for want of Action; and puts the Soul upon many sharp Conflicts, that when there is Occasion for exerting her Powers, she may not be found Unexpert and Defective. This is it which hath made so many Illustrious Heroes: This made *Hercules*, and *Theseus*, and *Diogenes*, and *Socrates*, to become Persons of such eminent Vertue and Renown. Their Characters would have been little, and their Excellencies lost; nor would Mankind ever have known to what wonderful Perfection an exalted Vertue can carry them, if there had been no such Things as Wild Beasts and Monsters, Tyrants and wicked Oppressors, Mortification, and severe Abstinence, to perpetuate these Mens Memory, and provoke the Proofs of their Courage and Resolution, and recommend their Examples to Posterity.

Now, I think, no Man that considers the Matter well, will doubt whether Afflictions do not better those that have supported them as they ought, and add infinitely to their Fortitude and Patience. For  
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since we see by the Instances of Gladiators and the like, that Use reconciles Men to the most formidable Dangers, and makes them a perfect Sport and Diversion, insomuch that they enter the List cheerfully, and play their Prizes for a very small Consideration; how can we imagine, that Exercise should fail in Matters of less Difficulty, and enable Men to disdain those Calamities, which none esteem insupportable, but they only who have not hardned themselves by Practice? From all which we may conclude, that when we consider Afflictions, either in the Quality of Remedies to cure our Distempers, or as Tryals and Exercises to confirm our Health and Strength, they cannot be Evil with respect to the Soul, which receives such mighty Benefit both these ways, how harsh and unpalatable soever the Application may seem. For at this rate we must run into another intolerable Absurdity, and condemn all those Medicines and Exercises as Evil in respect of the Body; to which, though they be grievous for the present, all our Recovery and all the Continuance of our Health is owing.

Again, Whatever is done in such Proportion and Manner as Nature and Choice both require, cannot be Evil; for a due regard to this is Just; and whatever is Just, is Good: Nay, even Cutting and Burning is not Evil to our Bodies; for these Bodies considered absolutely and by themselves, are insensible, and the Resolution of a Compound into its Simples, is not in Nature Evil to that Compound. Since then we allow, that Physick and Exercise, Burning and Binding, and Lopping off of Limbs, and all the Tortures that Men use, when they turn their own Executioners, are not Evil, but Good; since we think the Persons, who put us to these Pains for our Advantage, deserve to be thanked and rewarded for it, why do we find Fault with Almighty God, when He proceeds in the same Method? For alas, it is  
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not Anger, nor Revenge, nor Injustice, or Cruelty, nor any Design of Tormenting us, that puts him upon these Courses; but he acts with all the Skill and prudent Care of a Physician, with the Faithfulness and Tenderness of a Friend, with the Bowels of a Father, with the kindest Intentions of our greater Benefit, and, to say all in one Word, with all that incomprehensible Love and Goodness, which is any way agreeable to the Nature and Perfections of a God.

Now the Remedies he administers upon such Occasions, are divers: Some he humbles with Diseases, or Poverty, or Disgrace; some with the more publick Calamities of Famines, or Earthquakes, or Inundations, or Shipwrecks, or Wars; some he cures with such Medicines as come immediately from his own Hand, and others by more remote and distant ones, making Men the Ministers of his Justice, and Instruments of punishing one another. But still, if Physick and the Methods of Cure be not Evil, but Good, all these, and all other Remedies must be allowed to be so too, notwithstanding any Uneasiness that we may feel in the Operation.

If any one shall scruple the calling of these things Good, because they are not eligible purely for their own sakes, (as all things absolutely, and truly Good must be) yet at least let him forbear stigmatizing them with the Name of Evils, and rather call them necessary Expedients, for the attaining what is truly Good. In Order to which, and for the sake whereof, we chuse these, because that other is not to be had without them. For there is no Man so sottish and senseless, as to chuse Amputations and Searings, or any such violent Remedies, for their own sakes; but yet we do it from our Desire of Health, which these means must be assisting to us in. And indeed, the Philosophers have with great Propriety stiled all those things necessary Expedients, which are so ordered

dered, as to be preliminary to our Good, and such as we must make use of for it. These very Things then, so far as they conduce to our Good, and in that respect, are themselves Good, some as they contribute to the Health of the Body, and others to that of the Soul, though indeed they be so in a Qualified Sense only, and much inferior in Dignity and Value to those Things that are absolutely Good. And it is with regard to these more excellent Things, that the Generality of People look upon them, and so think them comparatively Evil, which yet, surely is a Censure too Severe to be justified, if they do not only Contribute, but are Necessary, to our Happiness.

If then the Objector's Arguments are sufficiently refuted; in that all Things that happen are so ordained of God, as that Nature and Choice have both their due, and as is most beneficial to Mankind; every Wise Man certainly will think himself obliged to be *well content Things should be just as they are*, (unless you will suppose him to envy the Giving every Thing its Due, and the Recovering such, as are Distempered, and need sharp Remedies,) he will most sincerely love and honour, and adore this Excellent Physician, and look upon him as the World's great and only Benefactor.

Now that Calamitous Circumstances are a sort of Remedies, and that the Administration of proper Physick, where the case requires it, is good both to the Body and Soul, no Body I presume will take upon them to dispute. But what course shall we take to persuade Men, that this very Distemper itself of Soul or Body, this miserable Condition that renders such painful Applications necessary, is Good and not Evil, and that the Author of it is not the Cause of Evil to us?

To this purpose I shall briefly recollect what was observed before, That Diseases are not Evil to the Body itself, as being by Nature made subject to them, and  
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tending to a diſſolution of the Compound, Reſolving each of its Parts, and Reſtoring the Simple Elements to their proper Maſſes; the Releaſing them from a ſtrange place where they were kept in Bondage, and putting an end to the perpetual Combat of oppoſite Qualities among them. Neither can the Diſeaſe of the Body be Evil to the Soul, for it hath been already ſhewn to be its Phyſick, and its Cure: And thus Experience often ſhews it to be. But granting, that Sickneſs and Corruption were injurious to one particular Body, yet ſtill it appears to be for the advantage of the Soul that owns that Body, and to the Conſtitution of the Universe in general, of the Elements of which it is formed, and the infinite Revolutions of Matter and Motion, which are therefore Infinite, becauſe the Deſtroying of one thing becomes the Production of another. Well therefore may the wiſe Governour of all things not value a Creature, which was by Nature corruptible; and diſregard a particular inconfiderable Corruption, confined to a ſingle inſtance, when the whole Creation is benefited, and the Better Ends are ſerved, and the Eternal Revolution of Things are continued and kept up by this means.

But perhaps you will ſay, though all this ſhould be admitted with regard to the Body, yet how ſhall we account for the Diſeaſes of the Soul? The frail and diſtemper'd State ſhe is in, can neither be for the good of her ſelf that languiſhes under it, nor does it contribute any Advantage to the Creation in common. So that the Author and Ordainer of this ſtate muſt needs be the Cauſe of Evil to her; and he that is content ſhe ſhould be thus deprav'd, and ſees and ſuffers her Sickneſſes, muſt needs be an ill natur'd Being; and therefore as to this particular, the Difficulty remains ſtill the ſame.

Now in answer to this Scruple, I beg leave to reſreſh your Memory, with what was diſcourſed before concerning

concerning the Cause of Evil and Vice to the Soul; while we were explaining *Epictetus's* Distinction between *what is*, and *what is not* in our own power; viz. That the Good and Happiness of the Soul consists in Prudent and Regular Desires and Aversions; and that the Evil and Misery of it proceeds from such as are Vicious and Exorbitant. Now I hope the Desires and Aversions have been sufficiently proved to be in our own Disposal; and if so, then we our selves are the Cause of our own Vices and Vertues. This is the true ground of all that Commendation which is thought due to Good Men; that their Happiness and Excellence is the Effect of their own free Choice; for which reason the *Greeks*, call Vertue by a Name which bears some Affinity to that which imports Choosing. And for the same Reason, Wicked Men are Condemned and Reproached, because they are such through their own Sloth and Baseness of Soul, when it is in their own Power to be otherwise. But now, if these Matters proceeded from any External Causes, this Vertue or Vice would be no longer Choice, but blind Chance, or fatal Necessity. And consequently our Evil and Misery can with no colour of Reason and Justice be charged upon Almighty God.

May we not indeed drive this Argument a great deal farther, and urge, that even Vice, which is properly the Disease of the Soul, is not positively and in all respects Evil; but is it self in some degree necessary to the very Being of Vertue among Men? For, as our Bodies, if Nature had not made them capable of Sickness and Infirmities, could not properly be said at any time to enjoy a state of Health, because in truth, this would not be Health, but a simple and fix'd Disposition, above the power of Frailties and Diseases, such as the Celestial Beings enjoy: So the Vertues proper to Humane Souls, such as Temperance, and Justice, and Prudence, and all the rest

of that Glorious Catalogue, would be no such thing, unless the Soul were of such a Nature as is liable to be depraved. For at this rate she would be graced, not with the Vertues of a Man, but with the Perfections of an Angel or a God; whose peculiar Excellence it is, that they can never be seduced, or deviate into Vice; but it is a Quality rooted in the very Nature of Men, and Humane Vertues, that they may degenerate, and be corrupted.

If then Humane Vertues in the Soul, and if the Health of the Body, though neither of them absolutely Uniform and Inflexible, be yet Good; and if the Order of Nature required, that beside the First, Simple, and Fix'd Beings, others, of a Middle and of Inferior Nature, should derive themselves from the great Original and common Source of all Good; then there was likewise a necessity that there should be Depravations of such good things as are subject to be Depraved, which have not any positive and absolute Existence of their own; but only a sort of additional one, cast in to those that have.

And in this, the exceeding Goodness of God is very remarkable, that He hath ordained the Dissolution of the Body, which as I said, does as necessarily follow upon Matter and Motion, as the Shadow attends upon its Substance; this Dissolution he hath made even a good thing, both with regard to the Bodies so Diseased and Dissolved, as they are restored back again to their Primitive Elements, and so the Simples out of which they are compounded, are renewed; and with regard to the Souls that own and use them, as they are cured and made better by this Means; and also to the Universe in common, by reason of that infinite Succession of Changes and Motions, which these Dissolutions, as I shewed before, keep continually on Foot. But as for Vice, the Evil of the Soul, and indeed the only thing, which, when well considered, proves to be Evil, of this he utterly



utterly acquits himself, and hath no part in it at all: First, Because he only permits to it an Additional and Accidental Being, and that not in the quality of Evil neither, but as being it self a necessary Expedient for the promoting of Good: And Secondly, Because, even after all these Limitations, it depends wholly upon the Choice and Determination of the Soul, and can have no Being at all, without our own Consent, and actual Concurrence. For which Reason it is, that all the Laws, both of God and Man, suffer such Actions as are done involuntarily, to go unpunished.

And indeed, all Evil whatsoever, is in some Sense an involuntary Misfortune to the Soul; for the Soul never chooses Evil, considered as Evil, but under the Disguise and Pretence of some Good; as sometimes Riches, sometimes Sensual Enjoyments, or Honours, or Preferments, and Greatness. Now in such Cases, the Mischiefs attending these, are either wholly overlooked, or else they are lessened and stifled by that prevalency of Passion which bribes and sways the Soul: So that there cannot possibly be any such thing in nature, as an Absolute Evil, when considered in all the Circumstances of it. And that, which never had any Being, may sooner be, than that even this Accidental Being in the Soul, should be entirely Evil, and chosen as such.

Some perhaps may imagine, that God is the Cause of Evil, as having given the Soul this Freedom to Virtue or Vice, to the ill Management whereof, that Evil is owing: Now indeed, if the Soul's being indued with a Faculty of acting freely and absolutely be Evil, then he who gave this Faculty, must be confessed the Cause of Evils: But if such a Power be Good, a greater and more valuable Good, than all the Advantages of the World besides; why then should he who hath given us the Good, be, for so doing, charged with the Evil? Since therefore,



that which is most agreeable to our Nature and Reason, is also most eligible and desirable, what account can be given, why any one that is a Man, and understands at all wherein the peculiar Excellence of a Man consists, should rather wish to be a Plant, or any other Irrational Creature, than that which God hath made him? Though at the same time we must allow, that even Plants, and other Irrational Beings, are Good in their Kind and Capacity, that is in a lower Degree, and a qualified Sense, and in proportion to the Uses they are designed to serve.

Now, if it be in our own power to be Good and Happy, and we have the sole Disposal of this Matter, so that nothing can possibly bring our Desires or our Aversions under any Compulsion to act as we would not have them, or under any Restraint, not to act as we would have them; such a Free Nature, and Absolute Power as this, is (in my Opinion) a Glorious Privilege, a most Magnificent and Royal Prerogative; and the Person in whom it is lodged, is thereby made a Great, a Happy, an Arbitrary Prince. But if such a Soul contribute to its own Deviations, and can choose whether it will so deviate or no; where can any Miscarriage of that kind be laid, with any tolerable Justice, but to the charge of the Soul it self; which is the true Original and Cause, both of its own Good, and of all the Deflexions from it, since in and by it such Deflexions first began? For the Great Creator, who hath thus made it, so as to be the Cause of its own Ruin, did not absolutely ruin it, but only made it capable of being ruined; and yet at the same time too, utterly incapable of it, without her own Consent. If therefore this Volition, or Consent, be an internal Motion of her own, she is the sole Cause of her own Sin and Misery.

Behold

Behold therefore the Goodness and the Wisdom of God! For since the Constitution of the World, and the Order of Nature, made a middle sort of Beings necessary, that should stand between those that are always above, and those that are always below; things that should bear a Resemblance, and be conformed, sometimes to the one, and sometimes to the other of these Beings, and thus make the whole perfect, by partaking of, and knitting together, the distant Extremes: Since also this tendency to things below us is but an accidental and additional thing, and this Prudence is the very thing capable of Depravation, he hath endued this middle sort of Beings with such a Tendency; yet so, as that they may still remain Untainted and Undepraved, if they will do so, and that he himself might be clear upon all Accounts, and in no degree the Cause of any manner of Evil.

These Arguments I have insisted on the more largely, not only, because they are proper for the explaining what *Epicetus* hath delivered upon this occasion, but also in regard they give us a great light into what he tells us afterwards, concerning the Nature of Evil. For we might have made very short work of the Case now before us, and needed only have given this Answer to all the Objections, that when *Epicetus* advises Men to be well pleased Things should be just as they are, he does not intend it of Vice, or that which is Evil to the Soul; (for he could never have said, that Men who are pleased with their own, or other People's Vices, are easie and happy,) but that we must restrain it to those Accidents, that affect our Bodies or our Fortunes. For these are things that a Wise and Good Man will be sure to make an Advantage of, however they are ordered; and the more Cross and Difficult they are, the more still will he profit by them. And these are the things he means, which foolish and ignorant Men wish may be con-

formable to their own Wishes and Desires; and not the Desires and Aversions themselves, in which all our Good and Evil consists. For they are in our own power, just what we please to make them; and consequently it were more absurd and foolish, to wish they were as we would have them. But he advises, that we would forbear wishing thus of Things out of our power; because this is what we cannot compels by any Strength of our own, nor would it always prove for our Advantage to do it, if we could: For we often are passionately desirous of what is pleasant, though at the same time it be prejudicial to us; and as often decline what is harsh and unpalatable, though Providence intend it for Physick, and design our mighty Benefit in the Application.

*Sickness is a Hindrance to the Body, but it does not enfeeble the Mind, nor can it obstruct her Freedom, unless she please her self: And Lameness is a Confinement to the Foot, but it can put no Restraint upon the Will, nor make that one jot the less Active. And the same Consideration is applicable in proportion to every Accident of Humane Life. For you will find, that though these may prove Obstructions to something else, yet they cannot, or need not, ever be so to you.*

He had told us immediately before, that the Way to live Easie and Happy, was for a Man not to wish that things might be just as he would have them, but to be well-pleased, that they should be just as they are: And now he proves the Argument, intended to be deduced from thence; which is, That all outward Misfortunes are to be entertained with Temper and Moderation; and not only so, but he removes (as I conceive) an Objection that might be raised against it.

The Argument it self seems to me to lie thus: If those Calamities, that happen in our Fortunes, or from any External Causes, were properly Ours, yet even upon this Supposition, we ought to suffer them with great Patience and Resignation, though they were much more Disastrous than really they are; when it is remembred, that even these are for our Advantage. But if they be not indeed ours, but each of them terminates in something else, and cannot extend to us, then it would be the last degree of Folly, to be disturbed at the Misfortunes which are none of our own. Sickness he says, is a Hindrance to the Body; and he says very well, that it is a Hindrance only, not an Evil. For we have seen already, that neither the Diseases, nor the Dissolution of the Body is Evil; but all that it does, is only to put a stop to its Operations, as Lameness likewise does, which was *Epicetus's* own Infirmary; so that he does not speak to us now in a Formal Speculative way, but from his own Practice and Experience. Thus Lameness is an Obstruction to the Parts affected, and Poverty is so to a Man's Expences and way of Living; but neither the one, nor the other, is so to the Will and the Mind, unless they voluntarily submit to be obstructed by it. I confess, if the Body, or the Foot, or our Estates were our very Essence and Nature, then these Hindrances would be truly and properly ours; but since we subsist in none of them, none but the Rational Soul only is our selves; since our Bodies are no more than Instruments by which we act, and our Possessions only Conveniences for ministering to our necessary Occasions; and since all our Good and Evil depends upon the Choice of our own Mind, and consequently cannot be restrained or obstructed by them, it is evident that we our selves are not hindred by these things neither. For no outward Accident whatever, can put any Confinement upon us, but only upon something

else, something which we are not. And therefore we must not suffer our selves to be disordered at these Misfortunes, as if they were our own; because by this means, we shall fall into an Evil, that is properly ours, upon the account of something that is not so: For Discontent, and a Disturbance of the Mind, are truly our own Evils. This I take to be the Force and Connexion of his Argument.

But besides this, he removes at the same time an Objection, drawn as the Rhetoricians use to term it, *Ab Utili*, from the point of Advantage and Convenience. For it may be said upon this occasion, that Sickness and Poverty cannot possibly be for our Benefit; for how is it possible, that a Diseased Man should perform all the Functions of Nature as he ought? or how can we deny, that a Man, when reduced to extream Poverty, is under an absolute Constraint to bend all his Care and Pains to the relief of his Wants, and furnishing himself with necessary Supports? This Objection now he takes off, by shewing, that Sickness, and Poverty, and all Hardships and Inconveniences of that kind, put the Will under no Confinement at all, and, that in this free Principle it is, that the very Being of Men consists; and all their Good and Evil depends entirely upon it. For how is the Sick Man tied up from choosing and desiring such things as are Vertuous and Reasonable, and hating and declining the contrary? Or what Violence can the Extreamest Poverty put upon a Man, which shall be able to compel him to act contrary to the principles of Honesty and Honour? Were not *Diogenes*, and *Crates*, and *Zeno* in these Circumstances? And did they ever shew themselves more truly Philosophers? Did they ever give more illustrious Proofs of Vertue and Greatness of Soul, of Contentment and Satisfaction, and even of Abundance in the slenderest Fortune, than when they chose to forego their Plenty, and thought

it Wisdom to exchange that for Want, and to have no Possessions of their own at all? And indeed, who is there so Blind and Brutish, but would be pleased and proud to sustain such a Man in his Necessities, and think his Liberality a greater Obligation and Honour to himself, than to the Receiver?

But what need we go so far for Examples of this kind, when even *Epictetus* himself, who makes this Declaration, was so eminent an instance of it? As to his Fortune and Condition, he was a Slave, Infirm in his Body, Lame from a Child, and one that was so much exercised with Poverty, and made it so much his Choice, that his little Cottage at *Rome*, was not thought worth a Lock or a Bolt. For alas! there was no Temptation within, nothing but a coarse Coverlet, and a hard Mattress upon which he lay. And yet this is the very Man, that tells us, Lameness may obstruct the Feet, but the Mind it cannot, except we please to let it. Thus you see, he did not make it his Business, as a great many do, to say fine things, and entertain his Readers with sublime and airy Speculations, but made the Experiment himself, and speaks from his own Knowledge and Practice. And for this Reason his Discourses are the more valuable, for they manifest a truly Great Soul in himself, and will make the deeper Impression upon all others, whose Minds are well disposed.

## C H A P. XIV.

*Upon every fresh Accident, turn your Eyes inward; and examine how you are qualified to encounter it. If you see any very Beautiful Person, you will find Continence to oppose against the Temptation. If Labour and Difficulty come in your way, you will find a Remedy in Hardiness and Resolution. If you lie under the obloquy of an Ill Tongue, Patience and Meekness are the proper Fence against it. And thus if you do but prepare and use your self by degrees, no Accident whatever will be able to surprise or subdue you.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**FTER having advanced some strange sublime Notions, and required Men to do that which the generality of the World will be sure to think Romantick and Impossible; as for Example, to slight the Diseases of the Body, as no Evil of ours; and to be well pleased, let our Circumstances be what they will, that things should go just as they do; never to suffer ones self either to be caught with the Bait of Sensual or Worldly Pleasure; or to be dejected with any outward Calamities: It is but reasonable, that he should apply himself in the next place, to shew that these are Perfections not above the Powers of Humane Nature, and that he enjoyns us nothing but what we are capable of discharging.



To this purpose he proves, that the Great Creator to whom the Soul of Man owes its Being, was pleased to give it such a Frame and Temper, that it should not be constantly determined to Sublime and Heavenly things, nor always dwell above, as the Blessed Spirits, the Angels, and those other of a Divine and still more Excellent Nature do, but hath ordered the Matter so, that this should sometimes be degraded to a State of Matter, and Motion, and Mortality; be joyned to the Body, and converse with Frail and Corruptible things. But though he hath subjected the Soul to these Hazards and Tryals, yet he hath endued her with particular Faculties and Powers suitable to each occasion; by means whereof, she may both engage with all the Accidents that can assault her, and come off without Loss; nay, and vanquish, and keep them under too.

Against such as tempt us with an Appearance of Pleasure, he proposes Continence; (and this he rather chose to mention, than those higher Degrees of absolute Chastity and Temperance; in consideration, that the Persons now address'd to, are but Imperfect and Young Proficients in Vertue.) Now these Objects stir the Passions up to Rebellion, and beget a Combat between Reason and them; but by Discipline, and a strict hand over ones self, they are subdued and reduced to Obedience again. And this is a true Description of that which we properly call a Continent Life; as on the contrary, that Man is properly said to be Incontinent, whose Reason is Impotent; and, though it may struggle for a while, yet, yields at last to the stronger Intults of Passion. But now in Persons, who have attained to the Perfection of Wisdom and Vertue, the Passions and Appetites (which as I hinted before, are the Child to be trained up in every one of our Minds) are in absolute Subjection to Reason, without any Dispute or Mutiny at all; so that they are moved and directed,

rected, entirely towards ſuch Objects, and at ſuch Times, and in ſuch Measures, as this ſees fit to preſcribe them. And this is truly Temperance, which the *Greeks* call *Σωφροσύνη*, as being that which ſecures the Reaſon, and preſerves the Government and Prerogative of the intelligent Part in us. For when this is brought under, and diſtracted by Paſſion, the Mind is torn in pieces, and deſtroyed. But while it maintains its own Superiority over the Affections, it continues vigorous and ſound.

So again, to Perſons that are Maſters in Philoſophy, Fortitude is always a preſent Security againſt all Difficulty and Pain; it keeps the very Outguards of the Soul, and ſuffers nothing of this kind to get the leaſt Footing there, but perſeveres without any Perplexity or Diſturbance, and looks upon all the Hardſhips that come in its Way, as ſo many Tryals to exerciſe it. But the Proſicients, who are leſs expert, muſt be content with Hardineſs and Reſolution, ſuch as may maintain its Poſt, and make a gallant Reſiſtance, and prevent the Sinkings of the Soul, by enabling it to continue the Fight, and ward againſt the Blows, when Trouble and Pains aſſault it.

For, a conſtant and vigorous Oppoſition, and hardening ones ſelf againſt Difficulties, will conquer all our Effeminacy and Paſſion, and make Reaſon and Vertue triumphant: and, by ſuch Conqueſts frequently gained, and prudently managed, our Paſſions will be uſed to the Yoke, ſubmit to Diſcipline, and obey without Reluctancy. And, when a Man hath brought himſelf to this Paſs, there will be no farther Trouble to exerciſe his Patience. He is now above it all; for he neither deſires any Thing, that is capable of giving him Diſappointment, nor does he make any Thing his Averſion, that can overtake him whether he will or no; and conſequently, can have no Trouble and Pain,  
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which always must proceed from one of these Causes.

Against Scandal and an Ill Tongue, he tells us we shall find our best Defence in Meekness. For in truth, Scandal, in its own Nature, hath nothing that can afflict us; and all that uses to do so, is not what is said, but the Judgments and Reflections we pass upon it; which we ever aggravate to our selves, according as we are blown up with Vanity, or transported with Anger. For all that Scandal can do without this, is only to make us condemn the Defamer. And for the proceeding regularly in this Condemnation, without Heat or Prejudice, we shall do well to consider, wherein the Defamer is really to blame; and that it is upon one of these two Accounts; that he slanders and asperses us, either falsely, or out of Malice. Now the Scandal it self may very well be born with, because it is not capable of doing us any real Injury; and so, in truth, may the Party that raises or spreads it too, when we consider, that the Injury is done not to Us, but Himself; for so it is, in reality, when his own Mind is the Sufferer, by doing an ill and a base Thing. Nay, if this be too little, we may consider farther, that Scandal is always capable of being made an Advantage to us. It is manifestly so when false; and when it is true, we gain this by it, That it discovers our own Faults and Failings, and either shews us something we did not know before, or which, though we did know, yet we were apt to indulge, upon a Presumption, that no Body knew it but our selves. And this very Consideration is of great Importance, to restrain young Proficients in Vertue. For such, though they are not come up to that noble Principle of practising Vertue for its own sake, will yet give check to many exorbitant Passions, and abstain from gross Evils, out of Shame, and Tenderness to their own Reputation. And indeed, this must be said

said in behalf of Ambition, and a Desire of Praise, that though it be a Passion it self, yet it is of excellent Use for the moderating and correcting all the rest. For this Reason it hath been called, by a pertinent Allusion, the Shirt of the Passions; because it fits closest to the Soul; and, when the Mind hath by the help of this put off all other Passions, it divests it self of this last of all, that so it may come to Vertue naked, and stripp'd of all its former Prejudices and Incumbrances.

For this Reason (says *Epictetus*) we must not suffer our selves to be surpris'd, or over-born by any Accident, that would engage our Minds, and draw them off to any External Advantages or Calamities; so as that we should be discomposed with any false Idea's of its being Good or Evil. Nor must we give too great a Scope to our Desires and our Aversions, nor let them be too hasty in their Motions, but call up the Powers within us to our Assistance; and when we have found, which are the Succours proper for each Circumstance, then rally them together, and enter the Lists with Resolution, and ward off every Accident accordingly.

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## C H A P. XV.

*Never use your self to say, upon any Occasion, That you have lost any thing, but restored it. If your Wife or your Child die, you have returned them to the Owner. If your Estate be taken from you, this too is paid back to the Giver. But you'll say, he was a Knave that defrauded me of it. Alas! what's that to the Purpose? or how does it concern you, by what Means, or what Hand, he that gave it resume it to himself? Trouble not your self therefore about these Matters, but while he permits the Enjoyment, use it as a Thing that is not your own, but anothers; and let your Concern and Affection for it, be just such as Travellers have for an Inn upon the Road.*

## C O M M E N T.

**H**E had instructed us before in the Nature of External Accidents and Advantages; which of them we might prosecute, and how far, and by what Methods we are allowed to do it; how we should entertain both our prosperous and pleasant, and our adverse and less grateful Fortunes; and what Improvement is to be made of each of them: and here he comes to speak of the Loss of any Advantages we have, and directs us, not only how to enjoy, but how to part with them too. Now every Man, who loses what he esteems his own, must needs apprehend himself injured, and naturally flies out, not only into Excess of Grief for his Loss, but into reproachful Language against those that deprived him of it: But he who restores upon Demand, what he knew and considered

considered was none of his own, must be the senseless Fool in the World, to be troubled at its being taken away from him, or to fall foul upon the Proprietor that requires it. This then is our Case directly. The World, and its Enjoyments, are not Ours; and for that Reason, not within the Command and Disposal of our own Wills; and nothing indeed is properly so, but our Desires and Aversions, and the Inclinations of our own Minds; and all our Virtue and Vice, all our Happiness and Misery, do depend upon these. So that we should always keep our Minds strongly possess'd with this Consideration, and be affected accordingly to every Thing without us, as that in which we have no Propriety at all. And the way to keep our Minds thus possess'd, and thus affected, is, not only to say so, and content our selves with Verbal Distinctions, but to shew it in our Practice, and behave our selves, like Men, who are convinced they have no Title to them.

Suppose then, upon the Death of a Child, that a Man gives himself over to Tears and Groans, deplores his Misfortune, and complains of his Loss; is it not evident, that this Man, while his Son lived, look'd upon him as strictly, and by Right, his own? If it were not so, with what Pretence does he call this being taken away a Loss, or resent it so deeply? And a Man that does thus, 'tis plain, would go farther too, if he could, and revenge the Injury he fancies he hath received, upon the Person that took him away, if it were in his Power. But the Man that considers this Child as one in whom he had not any absolute Propriety, and that Death hath only paid him back to the Person that lent him, will neither afflict himself upon the Occasion, nor accuse the Owner that demanded him again.

And here the Artifice of *Epictetus* is very observable; for he instructs us not only to adapt our Words to our Thoughts, and correct our Expressions by  
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more just Apprehensions of This; but contrives, that even our Expressions may rectifie our Notions. For to this purpose, he says, it is necessary, that we speak of the Enjoyments of the World in such Terms, as may not flatter us with any Imaginations of Property in them, but such as may wean our Affections, and make them sit loose about us; that so, from calling and thinking them anothers, and not our own, we may bring our selves to use them as such.

And, since nothing adds more to our Tenderneſs for any thing, than the Care and Concern we are in about it, he advises us to moderate these, and to bestow only so much upon them as we think worth our while to lay out upon that which is another Man's. Some regard indeed must be had to them, nor may we so neglect them, as to give our selves up to Supineness and Sloth; but yet we must not so fix our Hearts or our Endeavours upon them neither, as if they were our own, and that which is never to be taken away from us. And therefore all the Concern allowed us in this Case, is only that of Travellers in an Inn; who consider that they are not at home, and that their Stay is like to be very short; and are solicitous for nothing farther, than only to get the best Conveniences the Place will afford, and be satisfied with what they can get, for the little Time they do stay.

For this Reason, he hath added very conveniently, *while he permits us the Enjoyment*, to put us continually in Remembrance, that all our Enjoyments are upon Sufferance, the Effect of a permissive Providence, what we cannot give our selves, but derive from the Bounty of another, and that no other, than the very Person that takes them away from us.

And, because some People are apt to aggravate their Misfortunes, by tragical Accounts of the Circumstances that attend them, and the Manner of their being deprived of their Comforts. As, if I must lose my Estate, yet what need was there of losing it by so much Treachery, or Injustice, or Ingratitude? Or, if  
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my Child or my Wife had died of a natural or a lingering Death, a Fever, or a Consumption, I could have supported it ; but to be snatch'd away all on the sudden, to die a violent, an untimely, or a scandalous Death ; or to be rack'd with Tortures and strong Convulsions ; this is a dismal and an intolerable Affliction. Now all these Complaints favour of Discontent, and at the bottom are not a finding Fault with the Manner, but the Thing it self. For, as we could not prescribe to our Great Benefactor the Methods, or the Instruments, by which he bestowed them upon us, so neither must we find Fault with those by which he recalls them ; and it is but fit, that he who gave as he pleased, should take away as he pleases too.

We may take Notice farther, that *Epictetus* chooses to instance in the tenderest Points, the Death of a Wife or a Child ; because these sit closest to our Hearts ; and any other Losses, if compared to these are no more than every vulgar Vertue can sustain and slight. But still, as he told us before, and will do again in the following Discourses, we shall do well to begin with lesser Tryals, and by rendring them familiar and easie, harden our selves by Degrees against sharper and greater. The same Rule therefore holds much stronger, and is more practicable, when any one hath taken my Purse, or spirited away my Servant, or defrauded me of my House, or my Estate, to say, ( and we may say it with as great Truth in these Cases too ) I have not lost these Things, but restored them to the Owner, and Lender of them to me.

## CHAP. XVI, XVII.

*If you are indeed desirous to improve in Wisdom and Vertue, you must never allow your self in such mean Thoughts as these; I must follow the Bustness of my Calling close, or else I and my Family shall starve: I must take Pains with this Boy of mine, and chastise him, or he will be ruined. These are the Misgivings of an anxious Mind, and unworthy a Philosopher, whose first Care should be the Ease and Quiet of his own Breast. For a Man had better perish for Hunger, and preserve his Mind from immoderate Fear and Concern; than live in the greatest Plenty, and continual Perplexity with it. And it were a less Evil for you, that your Servant or your Child were Vicious, than that your self should be perpetually unhappy with an anxious Care to prevent it.*

*Use your self therefore to little Tryals first: If a Cruise of Oil be broken, or a Pint of your Wine stoln, reflect immediately, that this is the Purchase of Constancy and a composed Mind; and since nothing can be had Free-cost, he that gets these so cheap hath a good Bargain. So again, When you call your Servant, consider, that it is possible he may not attend to you; or if he do, that he may not do what you command him. And it is too great an Advantage that you give him over your self, if you put it in his Power, whether your Mind shall be easie or no.*

## C O M M E N T.

**U**Pon the Advice last given, that the Things of this World are what we ought not to think we have any Propriety in, or should be any farther solicitous about them, than Travellers are, to accommodate themselves in an Inn; It might very probably be objected; That this Contempt of the World will expose us to vast Inconveniences. For at this rate, says one, if I neglect the looking after my Estate, I shall reduce my self to Want and Beggary; and if for the avoiding this Anxiety, which you so strictly forbid, I omit the chiding and correcting my Servant, I shall be accessary to his utter Ruin. In Answer to both these, he insists upon that eminent Distinction in the Beginning of his Book, by which he hath proved, That all our Good and Evil, truly so called, depends entirely upon the Use of our Natural Liberty, and such Things as are within the Compass of our own Choice; and that no Condition either of our Bodies, or our Fortunes, can make Men truly Happy or Miserable.

But at present he addresses himself principally, to such as are in a State of Proficiency, and have not yet attained to such a Mastery in Wisdom, as should qualify them to attend to the cultivating their own Minds, and the Management of their Worldly Concerns both at once, in so prudent a manner, that these Cares should not be prejudicial to one another, or unsafe for the Person himself. For this is the peculiar Perfection of accomplished Philosophers, that they ride secure, and fear no Storms from those brutish Appetites, which they have absolutely subdued: Nor is there any Danger, if They do look abroad into the World sometimes, and give themselves a little loose, that their Affections should be seduced and  
perverted

perverted by any thing they meet with there, or the Peace and Tranquillity of their Souls at all disturbed upon that Account. These Men stand firm, and collected within themselves, and whatever Confusion they meet in the World, they manage and compose it all, by the fixt standing Order of their own Minds. But where the Passions run high, and are still upon the Ferment, there it is dangerous to engage a Man's self in Business at all, or be the least taken off from the best and severest Studies. For there is a wonderful Affinity between the World and the brutish Inclinations; and these, not being yet duly tempered, nor reduced to the Obedience of Reason, drag down the Mind, and utterly immerse it in Cares and Pleasures; which, like a Ship without Rudder or Pilot, will drive a wild and fatal Course, till at last she strand her self, and all be lost.

But in the mean while, what Course shall this Young Proficient take? For Necessaries he must have; and 'tis to no Purpose to give him Rules of Living, if you put it out of his Power to live at all. To this Difficulty, *Epicetus*, if he had pleased, might have replied, That a great part of the Prejudice a Man's Fortunes would receive from neglecting and despising the World, would be made amends for, by the strict Temperance, and Abstemious Life of a true Philosopher; the easie Contentment and confined Desires, that are an essential part of his Character. But, if this Remedy be not granted a sufficient Cure for the Disease, yet at least it may fairly be presumed, that there are People enough, who would preserve such a Man from perishing. Such a one, I say, whose Wants and Wishes will be so easily supplied, and who must needs attract Love and Esteem, when he neglects and scorns the World, for the Exercise of Vertue, and the Improvement of his own Mind. This Reply, I say, *Epicetus* might have made; and the Reason of the Thing would have born him out in it. But he passes  
such

such Comforts over, as too effeminate and indulgent, such as were likely to enervate our Vertue, and sully its Brightness; and therefore, as if it were a Blemish and a Disparagement, for a Wise and Good Man to stand in any need at all of any thing without, he runs the Comparison up to the highest and boldest Extreme, and pronounces peremptorily, That a Man had better die for Want, and preserve his Mind from immoderate Fear and Concern, and by that means attain to the peculiar Perfection of his Nature, than live in continual Perplexity, though he had the greatest Plenty with it, which can never give him that Perfection. For what does all this World signifie to a vicious and a disordered Mind, and one that in truth receives more hurt than good, from the Enjoyments of it? Just as sumptuous Entertainments, and rich Sauces gratify a Sick Man, who either cannot relish, or must not taste them; or if he do, is sure to nourish not himself, but his Disease.

So again, It were a less Evil, he says, for you, that your Servant or your Child were Vicious, than that you your self should be perpetually unhappy, with an Anxious Care to prevent it. If indeed Matters could be so ordered, that could preserve him and your self both, and attend to what is necessary for each of you, without Distraction, this were much more eligible. But this can never be, for Two Reasons; First, Because a Man, void of Wisdom and Vertue himself, will never be able to make another Vertuous and Wise; and then, because that by this inordinate Concern, you do him no manner of Good, but your self in the mean while, an infinite deal of Hurt. So that in such a case the best course we can take, is to let the Incorrigible Wretch alone in his Wickedness, and not discompose our selves, but take care at least to save one.

But when he had proposed the highest pitch of Resolution, and advised rather to choose Poverty and Death

Death with Wisdom and Vertue, than Plenty and Solicitude without them; and, if a Man be driven to that hard Necessity, rather to overlook the Vice and Ruin of one under his Care, than to lose his own Happiness, and undo himself, by trying to preserve another; to shew, that Men must be wound up to this pitch by degrees, and that he had a just regard to the Abilities of his Scholar, he advises them here to begin with less and gentler Tryals, and such as the Condition of Young Beginners are capable of. For Exercise and Practice in Matters of less Moment and Difficulty, is a safe and a successful Method; but when such things are look'd upon with Disdain, and below ones Notice, and a Man scorns the instances here, of his Oyl being spilled, or his Wine stoln, and will needs fly at all, and attempt great Hardships at first, he will fall under this double inconvenience; neither to be a Match for what we encounters, as having not made his way up to it gradually; nor to receive that Benefit and Advantage that he might have done from those others; which, had he not slighted them, would have qualified him for the Combat he hath lost for want of them. For let us imagin, that a Man without any preparation, or previous practice in Matters of less consequence, would needs all upon the spurt, take upon him to rival *Crates*, and divest himself of all his Possessions at once; how is it possible that this Person should not immediately repent, and condemn himself, and wish Ten Thousand times, that the thing were undone, and he in his former Circumstances again? For though *Crates* himself, or *Diogenes*, or *Zeno*, or some other Eminent Philosopher, may perhaps have made a sudden turn, and brought themselves to extreme Strictness, and Vertue, and voluntary Poverty, without such leisurely advances, yet still this is a thing that very rarely happens; and that which is extraordinary, is no rule for us to follow; especially too, when we consider, that these were themselves very

extraordinary Persons, and consequently no proper Measure for others, that are but of the common rate of Men, to govern themselves by.

After he had directed us, how to make great Losses and Misfortunes in our Estates, easie and familiar to us, by First despising those that are small and inconsiderable, for the improvement and confirmation of our Vertue; he instructs us, which way to get above all the Discomposure and Passion, that the Negligence, or the Sauciness of our Servants, may be apt to cast us into. For he tells us, we ought before-hand to represent to our selves, that it is very possible your Servant may not give his Attendance when called upon; or that if he answer to your Call, he may not observe your Commands: And that we should settle our Minds, not to give him so great Advantage over us, as the putting us into Disorder, would be. And this settling our Minds is very considerable, in that the Inconvenience is in a great measure defeated, by being foreseen. For it is the suddenness of an Accident that is most apt to confound young Proficients; this breaks their Measures, puts them out of their Biass, and beats them from their Posts. But Premeditation keeps the Mind firm and cool, it preserves our Thoughts, and gives us the power and leisure to recollect; and, by Use and Custom, prepares and arms the Mind against all those things, which our Fears and Imaginations represent most difficult and insupportable.

Now what a mighty Advantage this Preparation is, and how much better we entertain any Accident, when we are not surpris'd, every Man's own Consideration and Experience will inform him. Nor is this the case of Misfortunes only, but even of Pleasures and Good Fortune too, when they come upon us unexpected. Afflictions immediately overturn our Thoughts, and cramp up the Faculties of Reason and put both Body and Soul out of Temper; and Pleasures and Good Fortune, when sudden and surprisings,

scator



scatter and dissolve them, and enervate both Body and Mind. From whence it comes to pass, that these Causes, though so very distant in themselves, are yet attended with the same Effects; and the same Symptoms plainly prove the Disease to be the same. For an Excess, either of Joy or Grief, shocks the Constitution equally, and throws us into Swoonings, and Sweats, and the loss of Sense, sometimes even to Death it self.

But these things are so evident, that they need no enlargement; and therefore I rather choose to observe the Method *Epictetus* hath taken upon this occasion, and the Improvements we may make of it. When any Loss or Disappointment in our Affairs hath happened to us, he advises, that we would compose our selves with this Reflection; *That Constancy and a Composed Mind, are Treasures which must be bought, and this it seems is the Price which we must pay for them.* But when our Servants provoke us, either by being out of the way, and not ready to receive our Commands; or by being Insolent, and not obeying them; the Remedy in this case, is to prepare our Minds, and consider before-hand, that these were things very likely to happen.

This is the Method he prescribes, but the Improvement we should make of it, is to joyn both these Directions together, and apply them to either of the Cases indifferently. For indeed, we are no less obliged to receive any Losses whatsoever with all that Premeditation, and shall find them infinitely lessened to us by Expectation, and a possessing our Minds early with the Thought, that these things may very probably happen to us. And on the other Hand, when we are incensed by the Negligence or the Disobedience of Servants, or any other Provocation of that kind, it will turn to very good account to recollect, That Constancy, and a Composed Mind, are Treasures, that will not come for nothing; and this

this is the Price, that we are to purchase them at.

Now the Reasons, why *Epictetus* himself did thus apply both indifferently, seem to be, That the Instances produced by him, of Oyl spilt, and a little paltry Wine stoln, are too mean and trivial, to need the solemnity of any such Preparation ; and that, in Matters so small, a short Recollection is sufficient, after the thing hath happened. And not only so, but because in things of less Consideration, the prospect of the Gain, and comparing the Price with the Purchase, is abundantly enough to prevail upon the Soul. For what occasion can there be of Grudging or Discontent, when for such a Trifle as a little Oyl or Wine lost, a Man has it in his power to receive a thing so valuable as Constancy and a Composed Mind, by way of Exchange ? Nay, and not only to procure this for once and no more, but to gain the standing Disposition and Habit of it, which may be ready at hand, and serviceable upon every occasion, provided he drive a wise bargain, and manage his Market with any skill and dexterity. Who would not be proud and pleased to make that Exchange which *Homer* tells us *Diomedes* did, when he bartered Brasse for Gold ? And what Man, that hath the Sense and Reason of a Man, would not gladly forego any Advantages of Fortune, if he can obtain the greatest and most desirable Advantages of the Mind in return for them ? Especially too, when the Matter may very frequently be so ordered, as not properly to forego them neither, but by a prudent forethought and preparation, to think that a thing of no Concern to him, and so not be sensible of any Loss at all.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*If you would indeed improve in Wisdom, you must be content to be thought Foolish and Stupid, for neglecting the Things of the World.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE Reason, why many of us lay out so much of our Thoughts and our Pains upon the World, is not always a Desire to be supplied with what is necessary and convenient for our Circumstances, but to avoid the Censure of being thought Singular, and Insensible, and Speculative Drones. Now in opposition to this Principle, and all the Discouragements such Apprehensions give us, he advises every Scholar of his, who would be wise in good earnest, not to let so poor a Pretence prevail upon him, to abandon himself to the Cares of the World, and neglect the true and inward Advantages of his own Mind. For what a Monstrous Absurdity is it, for a Man to be really Mad, for fear of being thought so; and to commit the most desperate Act of Folly, lest he should be called Fool by those that are no better than Fools themselves? And in truth, there is nothing contributes to a Vertuous Life, and such a Behaviour as is every way suitable to the Character of a Man, considered as a Rational Creature, more, than to resolve not to be a Slave to the Opinions of the World, not to make what idle and silly People approve, any measure of our Actions, or rule to walk by; but to use ones self to despise both their Commendations and their Censures, and to keep our Eyes steady upon the Dictates of right Reason, and the Judgments of those few Good and Wise Persons who live in Conformity to it; and let these guide and govern us in the Management

ment of all our Affairs. For Reason is the proper Standard, to which all our Actions should be agreeable, and all the Men whose Opinions are worth our regarding, will be sure to approve whatever is so.

*Do not affect to be thought exceeding Wise ; and if other People think you something more than ordinary, let this make you so much the more Distrustful and Jealous of your self. For be assured, it is no easie matter to prosecute your Designs upon Vertue, and othen external Advantages, at one and the same time. But he that sets his Heart upon either of these, will of course find his Concern for the other abate and grow cold.*

Epictetus hath taken a great deal of Pains to confine the Soul of his Young Philosopher within a narrow compass, that all his Care may be employed at Home, upon the Improvement of himself ; especially, when he first enters into this reform'd course of Life. And since the Desire of Riches, and the Cares of the World, are but a part of those Temptations that engage the Affections, and misplace them abroad ; for a Superstitious value for Reputation, and popular Applause, is every whit as dangerous a Bait ; ( and so much the more so indeed, in regard they who are accomplish'd Persons, and have some real Excellencies to recommend them to the World, are the more apt to be insnared by them,) he advises to root out this vain-glorious Appetite by all means.

*Do not affect to be thought Wise, says he ; not that he condemns the most zealous Desires or Endeavours after Knowledge, but only to suppress the Vanity of desiring to appear Knowing. For this swells the Mind, and puffs it up with flashy Imaginations, and inclines it to the World. It represents the Opinion of others, as the Rule of Acting, rather than Duty, and the Dictates of a Man's own Conscience ; and makes*  
him

him live no longer to himself, but to his Masters, the People; and, which is worst of all, it makes a Man satisfied with the empty Shadows, and outward Appearances of things; and neglect the Substance. For the Vain-glorious are not half so much concerned to be really Vertuous or Wise, as they are to impose upon themselves and the World, in seeming so. For this Reason he expresses himself very prudently here, and says not, *Do not be thought Wise*, but *Do not affect to be thought so*: For in truth, the Esteem other People have of us, is a thing by no means in our own power; nor can we make them think as we would have them; but the courting that Esteem, and being fond of such a Character, is entirely our own Act and Deed.

And therefore, since the World will sometimes have a great Opinion of our Abilities, whether we seek it or no; in such a case, says he, let their Commendations *make you but so much the more distrustful and jealous of your self*. For this will be a most excellent Preservative against the giving your self up to be governed by other People's Judgments, and taking up with the Fame or False Images of Goodness, instead of the thing it self. Besides, that the suspecting and thinking more meanly of ones self, when the World extols one most, is a Duty particularly seasonable for young Philosophers. For they that are Masters in it, sit secure above the Breath of Fame, pass just and impartial Judgments upon their own Actions; and, as they do not think the better, so neither need they think at all the worse of themselves, for what the World say of them.

Now Reputation and Applause, we know very well, is not the Attendant of Knowledge only, but of Temperance and Moderation too, of Justice and Fortitude, of Prudence, and indeed of every Vertue whatsoever. Every Accomplishment that qualifies us for Business, and makes us useful to our Country, and one another, of every Character of any extraordinary Eminence

Eminence in the World ; all which he hath comprehended here in this short Expression of being *thought something more than ordinary* ; which extends to every kind of Opinion, that is for our Advantage, let the Ground of it be what it will.

At last, he shuts up all with a Conclusion, applicable not only to this Chapter, but to those that went before, concerning the Care that is due to our own Minds ; and intimates, that a Learner in Philosophy, will find it no easie Matter to prosecute his Designs upon Wisdom and Virtue with Success, and at the same time to grasp at Riches, or Fame, or any other Worldly Advantages. And the Reason is, because the keeping our Minds tight in the prosecution of Virtue consists, in an extraordinary Vigilance and Concern for our selves, and the regulating our own Wills ; and in making all without us, all that are called the Goods of Fortune, little or no part of our Concern. But now an eager pursuit of Fame, or any other external Advantage, utterly overturns this whole frame of Mind ; for it engages our Affections upon Forein and distant things, and makes us cold and careless for our selves. Therefore it can be no easie matter to reconcile these wide Extremes, and manage both at once. But still you may observe, with what Caution our Author delivers himself ; he declares it difficult, but he dares not pronounce it impossible ; because there are some exalted Minds, that exert themselves to the Wonder of Mankind, and consequently must be admitted for Exceptions from the general Rules of Nature. But as for the rest, who are of the same Mould and Tempering with their Neighbours, to them the Rule in the Close holds good, That he who proposes to follow one of these in good earnest, and to purpose, must wholly lay aside all Concern for the other.

## C H A P. XIX.

*If you desire that your Wife, and Children, and Friends may never Die, this is a Senseless Wish; for you would have what is not your own, to be in your own power; and would dispose of that which is anothers. So again, if you desire that your Boy may live without any Faults, this is Foolish too; for it is to wish, that Vice and Corruption may change their Nature, and be no longer what they cannot but be. But if you will needs be wishing, and would wish so as not to be disappointed, this may be done; and therefore the best way is to practise upon that which is in your own power.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE first Care of a Man should be, to consider what things are worth his Pains; and those that deserve to be thought so, 'tis plain, must have the following Qualifications: They must be possible, for none but Fools lay themselves out upon what can never be compassed. And they must be decent and proper for the Person that takes pains for them; something that suits his Character and Conveniences, and such as he may call his own when he hath them. For nothing can be more impertinent, than to concern ones self in other Peoples Matters, and neglect our own; or to be extremely solicitous for obtaining that, which another will always retain the propriety to. A Third Consideration should be, of what value the Prize we propose to our selves will be; of what constancy and continuance; and whether we can be secure of keeping it when we have got it. For no prudent Man will give himself trouble about Trifles,



fles, and things that will turn to no account; or such as are likely very soon to decay, or forsake him.

And therefore in pursuance of his Design, to call off his young Philosophers Affections from the World, and to drive on his former Distinction of *Things that are*, and *Things that are not in our own power*; he proves, that all external Advantages whatsoever, are really not ours, but anothers. And he had shewed at the beginning, that whatever is anothers, cannot be any of the things in our own power, nor consequently a proper Object of our Choice.

When a Man then is desirous, that his Wife, and Children, and Friends, may never be taken away from him, this Man is solicitous for a thing in which his Choice hath nothing to do; a thing that it is not possible for him to bestow upon himself; for when things are not entirely at our own Disposol, nor submitted to the Determinations of our own Wills, it is not for us to make our selves Masters of them; but we must depend upon the good pleasure of those Persons for them, in whose Possession and Disposol they are.

Besides, there is not any of those Advantages we are so fond of, but they are really mean, and of no value at all, frail and perishing, and the Enjoyment of them short and uncertain. Who then would give himself trouble, for so low, so poor a Recompence? Or who would engage his Affections upon what so many Casualties may, and daily do conspire against, and what they must at length destroy, and rob him of? So vain is it to fix ones Happiness, or ones Desires, in the Lives of our tenderest Friends, (for instance,) or to delude ones self with vain Hopes, and fond Wishes of their living always; when at the same time they are Mortal, and must submit to the same fatal Necessity, with every thing else that is so; which is, to depart without delay or mercy, whenever Death summons them away.

So again, If a Man wish that his Servant may be Vertuous, nay, even an Honester and Better Man than himself, (as many of us are apt to do sometimes, when provoked by the Knavery of Servants,) this Man, (says *Epictetus*) is a Fool, and wishes an idle and impossible thing. For since all Knavery proceeds from Vicious Principles, and the Corruption of the Mind, how can it possibly be, that a Man, who takes no care to Govern or Reform his Brutish Appetite, but submits and lives according to it, should act any other-wise than Viciously? So vain is it for Men to expect Success in these Matters, when they place their Affections and Concern upon things that are either impossible to be had, or at the disposal of some other Person, or poor and perishing, and as hazardous and unsure in the Enjoyment, as they were difficult in the acquisition. Must not Men needs fail of their hopes, where so many Accidents concur to disappoint them? And if they lead a Life of Disappointment, must they not of necessity lead a Life of Sorrow and perpetual Torment too? Against all these Miseries, there is but one Remedy, and that is an effectual one indeed: 'Tis to make our Selves, and what Nature hath put within our own power, the sole Object of our Care and Concern. Now Nature hath given us an absolute power of confining our Desires to such things as she hath made necessary and expedient for us. And therefore we shall do well not to be too lavish, nor squander them away upon vain and unprofitable Matters, but to lay them out upon those others, for they can never fail our Expectations, and will be sure to turn to good account, when we have attained them.

## C H A P. XX.

*That Person is properly my Lord and Master, who hath it in his power to gratifie my Wishes, or to inflict my Fears; to give what I desire to have, or to take from me what I am loth to part with. The only way then to preserve one's Liberty, is to restrain one's own Passions, and to have neither Desire nor Aversion for any thing in the power of others: For he that does not so, is sure to be a Slave as long as he lives.*

## C O M M E N T.

**H**ERE again we meet with another severe Reflection upon the World, and a just Censure upon those, who abandon themselves to the Love and the Cares of it. For by this means, we do not only betray our Minds to Misery and Trouble, when our Desires are frustrated; and the Misfortunes we fear, overtake us; but which is more, we sink into a state of Slavery, and submit, not to one, but to many Masters, to a thousand imperious and merciless Masters. For whoever it be, says he, that hath it in his own power to gratify our Desires, or to bring our Fears upon us, to give what we would fain have, or to take away what we are loth to part with, that Person is most truly our Lord and Master. So that, at this rate, every Passion, and every Accident, tyrannizes over the worldly Man without Resistance or Controul.

With what humble Submission do we cringe to those that have the Riches, or Preferments, or Honours we desire, in their Disposal! How servile are all our Applications, and how obsequious all our Behaviour, that we may incline their Favour, and prevail

tail for the Advantages we propose to our selves from it? And again, when any of these Enjoyments lie at their Mercy, with what Terrors and misgiving Fears do we approach them? what mean Acts do we make use of to keep their Countenance and good Graces? and how pitifully do we flatter and fawn upon them, to secure the Continuance of that, which they may deprive us of whenever they please? So poor and precarious are all the Goods of Fortune, so absolutely anothers, and so little our own. For that which another can bestow, or call back again, is properly his; and nothing is really ours, but what falls entirely within the Compass of our own Power and Choice.

If then Liberty be, as certainly it is, a most desirable Thing; and if we would assert our own Freedom, and break our Chains; the Course we must take is, to contract our Fears and Desires, to contain them within their proper Sphere, and not suffer them to rove abroad, or fix them upon any thing within the Power of any but our selves. For if we do so, our Slavery is sure, and the Instances of it infinite. Our Desires are our Masters, when we would obtain them, and our Possessions, when we dread the loss of them: Our Aversions are so, when we fear Dangers, and our Misfortunes, when we fall into them.

To this we may add another Observation too; That every Man in these Circumstances is subject to two Masters; one at home, and another abroad: For the Brutal Appetite within, that moves our Reason, (that is, our selves, whose very Essence consists in this) and carries it away captive, submits both Reason and it self to another Master, which is the outward Object of our Passions: So that we are not only Slaves, but the meanest and most abject of them all, even the Slaves of Slaves.

Besides, Other Servants have some Intervals of Freedom and Leisure at least; they are not always confined to their Master's Presence; they are upon

the Level with other Men at some times ; Night and Sleep sets them free ; and they obtain Leave and Ease now and then, under the hardest Government. But Our Attendance is without any Intermiſſion ; we can neither fly from our Maſters, nor will they ever remit or diſpenſe with our Service ; ſleeping and waking we ſtill drudge on, and are ever labouring to ſatiſſie the insolent, unjuſt, and extravagant Commands of our cruel Tyrants. No Moment of Reſt is allowed us after once we have ſubmitted to them ; but they are perpetually teasing, and haraſſing us, and imploying us either with wicked Actions or Words ; or when there is an Opportunity for neither of theſe, then diſtracting us with idle Thoughts and fantaſtick Imaginations.

Nay, and which is yet worſt of all, and the moſt deplorable Aggravation of our Miſery, in Other Caſes, the better ſort of Servants have a Soul above their Condition, and owe their Bondage to the Neceſſity of their Affairs, and the Rigor of a penurious Fortune ; but Ours is not our Fate, but our Choice ; We hug and are fond of our Chains, and are perpetually contriving to bind our Slavery faſter upon us, exceeding Induſtrious to make our ſelves miſerable, and ingenious in finding out new Methods of Rum ; that is, ever ſeeking out ſome freſh Object of Deſire or Fear, and in order to it, complying with ſuch Commands, as are never obeyed, but to our infinite Damage, if not our utter undoing.

## CHAP. XXI.

*Let it be your constant Care, to behave your self in all the Affairs of Humane Life, with the same Decency that you would at a publick Entertainment. If any thing be offered you, receive it with Modesty; if it pass by you, and be sent to another, do not with-hold it from him, or keep what was not intended you. If the Dish be not yet come down so low, shew not your self eager, nor snatch at it greedily, but wait patiently, till it comes to your turn. Manage your self with the same good Manners and Reservedness, in case of a Wife, or Children, or Honours, or Riches, or Power, and Preferment. This will render you worthy to be entertained by the Gods. But if you can conquer Appetite so far, as even to refuse and disdain the delicious Meats that are set before you: This will not only qualifie you to feast with the Gods, but exalt you to the same Dignity and Perfection with them too. Such was Diogenes and Heraclitus, and those other renowned Heroes, who by this generous Scorn were justly esteemed, and in reality were Divine Persons.*

## COMMENT.

**A**FTER so many Arguments used to check the mighty Propensities of Humane Nature, and restrain his Scholars from too eager a Pursuit of the Goods of Fortune, lest his Discourse should prove less persuasive for being thought too severe, he tells

us, that it is not his Intention to debar Men from all Communication with the World; and therefore he instructs us, what Advantages they are allowed to partake of, and how they ought to demean themselves with regard to them. He had before indulged us the Use of, not only the Necessaries, but the Conveniences of Humane Life; provided that we accepted of these as additional Enjoyments, and did not mistake them for our main Concern, but kept our Minds and Eyes constantly intent upon the Ship, and (as he expressed it there) were ready to come on Board, and Sail at the Master's Call. And now he tells us, that whatever of this kind is presented to us, we may receive it, whether it be a Wife, or Children, or Riches, or Advancement; but then we must take it modestly and decently, and not suffer our Appetites to grow impatient, and snatch or reach at it rudely, before it is offered. So again, if they were once ours and are taken away (for thus I understand that Expression of passing by, and being sent to some body else) we must by no means detain them, he says; that is, we should part with them patiently, neither struggling to keep them, nor repining at the Loss. If they be not yet come to us, it will ill become us to desire them before our Turn, to feed our Wishes and Imaginations with them, and be so taken up with these, as to forget both Vertue and our Selves.

When they are given to us, we must not receive them even then voraciously, and with too much seeming Transport; but decently and gently, that so we may keep our selves above them, and use them prudently, without suffering our Affections to be overpowered by, and wholly immerst in them.

Now the Condition of Men in the World is here represented, by People met together at a Common Entertainment; where Almighty God makes the Invitation and the Feast; and every one of the Guests partakes of the Provision, according as his own Appetite



tire stands affected. Some behave themselves with a prudent Reserve, like well-bred Persons, as the Dictates of Reason and Nature direct them, and in a manner acceptable to the Master of the Feast, so as to seem a Guest worthy of the Gods. Others again are insolent and unruly, greedy and gluttonous, injure themselves, and displease the Great Lord that receives them.

But the especial Excellency is yet behind. For if you are a Person of so exalted a Vertue, as not only to wait with Patience, and accept with Modesty, but even to decline and slight these worldly Advantages, that the Generality of Mankind dote upon so infinitely, and can deny your self what the Master of the Feast offers to you; this is the utmost Perfection Mortality is capable of: the World is no longer worthy of such a Person: he hath transcended Humane Nature it self, and is not only fit to be a Guest of the Gods, but to be admitted into a share of that Dignity, and those Divine Excellencies, which he hath wrought himself up to so near a Resemblance of.

This was the Case of *Crates* and *Diogenes*, the latter of which exprest so just a Contempt of the World, that, when *Alexander the Great* saw him basking in the warm Sun, and asked, what he should do for him? he desired no more, than only that he would stand out of his Sun-shine. Which Answer gave so true an Idea of the Gallantry of his Soul, that this mighty Conqueror thought that Philosopher, a Braver and Greater Man, than himself in all his Triumphs; and said, that he could wish, if that were possible, to be *Diogenes*; but if not, then his second Wish should be to continue *Alexander*.

Thus then the Good Providence, that constitutes this mortal State, and mingles Mens Circumstances in it, as it sees most suitable and convenient, advances those Persons to the Table of the Gods, who manage the Incumbrances of the Body and the World, ac-

cording to the Directions they have given us, and temper all their Actions with Prudence and Moderation. But when Men do not only manage, but transcend the World and its Enjoyments, when they get quite above these Things, and exercise an absolute Mastery over them; then the same Providence calls up those Souls, that so well imitate the Divine Excellencies, into a sort of Partnership and Government, and makes them (as it were) its Assistants in the disposing of Things here below. For, what can we think less of them, while they sit enthroned on high, and look down, and order all Things, with such undisturbed Security, and so Imperial a Sway, as if themselves were no longer a part of this Universe, but, like those Beings above, were distinct and separate from it, and governed their own World?

For this Reason, *Epictetus* says, *Heraclitus* and *Diogenes*, that had a generous Disdain for these Things, were justly esteemed, and in reality were, Divine Persons. And indeed, they are truly so, that live up to the utmost Perfection of their Nature, and divest themselves of all Concerns for the Body and the World. They are spiritualized already, and have no more to do with any Impressions of Flesh and Sense. This is the utmost Perfection of a Humane Mind, and whatever is absolutely perfect, is Divine; because it is of God, who is the Source and Sum of all Perfection.

## C H A P. XXII.

*When you see a Neighbour in Tears, and hear him lament the Absence of his Son, the Hazards of his Voyage into some remote Part of the World, or the Loss of his Estate ; keep upon your Guard, for fear lest some false Idea's that may rise upon these Occasions, surprise you into a Mistake, as if this Man were really miserable, upon the Account of these outward Accidents. But be sure to distinguish wisely, and tell your self immediately, that the Thing, which really afflicts this Person, is not really the Accident it self, ( for other People, under his Circumstances, are not equally afflicted with it ) but merely the Opinion, which he hath formed to himself concerning this Accident. Notwithstanding all which, you may be allowed, as far as Expressions and outward Behaviour go, to comply with him ; and, if Occasion require, to bear a part in his Sighs, and Tears too ; but then you must be sure to take care, that this Compliance does not infect your Mind, nor betray you to an inward and real Sorrow, upon any such Account.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**S this Consideration, that the desirable Things of this World are not, cannot be our Happiness, though we should suppose a Man never so prosperous, should restrain our Eagerness, and check our

too forward Desires after them; so that other Reflection, that no External Misfortune can make us truly miserable, should be an Argument no less prevailing, to buoy up our Spirits, and make us entertain them with Courage and Resolution.

To this purpose, our Author urges the following Instance of a man in great Grief and Lamentation for some Calamity; the Death or the Distance of a Darling Child, the Loss of an Estate, and being reduced to extreme Poverty, or the like. And the Caution he gives upon such Occasions, is, that the Spectators would not suffer themselves to be born down by the Torrent of this Man's Tears, and carried into an Erroneous Opinion of his being made miserable by any of these Disasters: For, they are to recollect themselves, and consider, that no Mans Happiness or Unhappiness does, or ever can, depend upon his Successes in the World, or any of the Good or Bad Events from without.

But if this be so, how comes it then to pass, that this Person is so infinitely afflicted, as if some real Ill had happened to him? The Accident, it is plain, cannot be Evil in its own Nature; for were it so, all Persons that lye under the same Misfortune, would feel the same Impressions, and be carried to an equal Excess of Grief: For this is a Rule in Nature, that Natural Qualities have always the same Operation; and what feels hot to one, will feel so to every one that touches it. At this rate then, every one that buries a Son must mourn and lament; and yet *Anaxagoras*, when News was brought him of the Death of his, made Answer, with all the Bravery and Unconcernedness in the World, Well, I knew my Child could be no more than mortal. But what then is the true Cause of all this Melancholy? Nothing else, but the Man's own Notions of this Accident: this is the Root of all the Disease; and our Opinions are properly our own. So that we will grant the Ground of this excessive Grief

to be not only a seeming, but a real Evil; but then the Mistake of the Person still remains; for it is not in any Accident from without, but rises entirely from within himself, and is owing to nothing else but his own wrong Apprehensions. And this is both a real Evil, and properly ones own too, because Opinions are some of those Things within our own Power, and the Truth and Falshood of these depends purely upon the VWill, and falls within the Compass of our own Choice.

You will ask perhaps, in the next place, what Behaviour is proper in such a Case? Is no Compassion due to this afflicted mistaken Man? And must I only with a sullen Magisterial Pride condemn his Error, and chide or scorn his Folly? By no means. This Deportment is unsuitable to the Character of a Good Man. You are allowed therefore to pity and comply with him, to condescend in some measure to his Frailties, to speak kind and tender Things, and if you see Occasion, to drop a few Tears for Company. Nor is all this to be put on merely for Ostentation, or to shew Good Nature: For, Dissimulation and Trick is what no Circumstance can render excusable to a Good Man. But your Trouble may be real; and indeed, there is but too just a Pretence for it, when you see such an Instance of Humane Infirmity, as a Man that can think the Misfortunes of the VWorld worth so immoderate a Concern.

But still you must set Bounds to your Pity and Condescension, for Grief is catching; and therefore be sure to take care, that it do not fasten upon your Mind, and so you fall into the same Disease of a real Concern for the Accident it self. If once you sink so low you are for the future incapable of doing the Sorrowful any Service. He that would be serviceable to another's Cure, and quiet the Anguish of his Passions, must make some Advances indeed, and some Compliances, but he must be sure to keep out of the Reach

of Infection too. A Man that stands still upon the Bank, and will not so much as step into the VVater, can never draw his Friend out when he is drowning; and a Man that jumps in, and lets the same Stream carry him away too, can as little do it. He that appears insensible, and void of all tender Impressions, will never be able to compass another's Passion, and bring him to Reason; but he that suffers the same Passion to overcome his own Reason too, will be so far from serving his Friend, that he himself must be beholden to the Assistance of some third Friend.

## C H A P. XXIII.

*Remember, that the World is a Theatre, and that your Part in this Play of Life is determined by the Poet: Upon him it must depend, whether you shall act a long or a short one; whether your Character shall be high or low: If therefore he assign you that of a Beggar, take care to humor it well; if a Cripple, or a Prince, or a private obscure Man, or whatever it be, make the best of it: For consider, that the playing of the Part assigned you commendably, depends upon your self. This is your Business; but the giving out of the Parts, and choosing the Actors, is not yours, but another Person's.*

## C O M M E N T.

**I**N one of the Chapters a little before, this present Life, and the Distribution and Enjoyment of the Comforts and Advantages of it, was compared to a Publick Entertainment, and the Maker and Master of that Entertainment was said to be Almighty God, who left us at Liberty, either to accept, or to refuse,  
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the Dishes that were set before us. For this Reason it was, that such Pains were taken to correct and form our Appetites aright; and to instruct us, how we ought to govern our Selves, and our Choice, with regard to all External Events, past, present, and future. For, at Feasts every Guest feeds of what is set before him according as his own Palat stands, and his own Judgment directs him.

But here we meet with another kind of Representation; where Life is resembled to a Play, in which every Man breathing bears a part, but the Composer and Dispenser of these Parts is God. For in this respect the present Similitude differs from the former, that in it we are not left to our own Disposal, whether we will accept what is assigned us or not. Providence hath appointed our Character, and we cannot change nor decline it. There are infinite Instances of this kind, that seem to carry a plain Fatality in them. For though, when Riches are offered us it is in our Power to reject them, and embrace a voluntary Poverty; yet when Poverty or Sicknes is laid out for us, it is not then in our Power to decline these. So again, we may choose whether we will be Masters and Governours or not; but we cannot choose whether we will be Servants or Subjects, or not.

All then that is left to our own Liberty here, is the Management of what falls to our share; and the Blame or the Commendation, the Happiness or the Misery of a Man in such Cases, does not consist properly in desiring or not desiring, accepting or refusing, (for this last does not fall within our Sphere) but in such a Management as is still left at our own Liberty; that is, the behaving our selves decently or otherwise, suitably or unsuitably to our Condition. For tho we cannot avoid Poverty or Sicknes when we would, yet we can make a Vertue of Necessity; and, if we please, can carry our Selves handsomely under them. And all the Fate  
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in the World cannot tye us up so far, but that the husbanding and making the best of those things which we cannot help, shall be still as much in our own Breasts, as of those which we choose and procure for our own selves.

Thus it is in the practice of the Stage : The Choice of the Players, is the Poets Work ; it is he that gives out the Parts, according to the particular Humours of the Actors ; he takes notice of their Qualifications and Abilities, and then suits the Persons to the Characters they are capable of. One he appoints to personate a Prince, another a Servant, another a Mad-Man, ( for every one is not fit to play *Orestes*. ) Thus far his Care goes, and he is answerable no farther : For the Persons, to whom these Parts are assigned, must account for the doing them Justice in the Action.

For this Reason it is, that Men do not judge of the Entertainment of a Play-House, by the Greatness or Quality of the Character, but by the just Proportion, and the natural Representation, and the Gracefulness of the Action it self. How often do we see a Beggar, or a Servant, or a Mad Man clapped, and at the same time, a Rich Man, or a General or a King hissed ? The Reason of which is, that one hath hit the Humour of his part, and maintained the Character that he was to appear in, and the other did not so. The Beggar behaved himself as a Beggar should do, and the King sunk beneath the Grandeur of his Post ; and this Behaviour was the proper Business of the Actors themselves, though the choosing whether they should personate a King, or a Beggar, was not.

Just thus we find in this vast Theatre of the World ; How many Emperors, and Wealthy, and Strong Lusty Men, have spoiled their Parts, while the Poor, the Lame, the Slave, the Despised *Epictetus*, performed his, with the approbation of his Great Master, and to the wonder of all the Spectators ? For though his Part  
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had less of Pomp and Shew than theirs, yet he studied the Character thoroughly, and kept it up to the very last, and answered the Design and Directions of the Poet, that destin'd him to it. This was his proper Business, and therefore this Commendation is due to him for it: For, as no Man's Happiness or Misery can consist in any thing but what falls within his own Choice, so neither will any Wise Man allow, that either Praise or Commendation, Honour or Infamy, belongs properly to any thing else. And consequently, it is not the Part, but the manner of acting it, that every Man distinguishes himself by:

## CHAP. XXIV.

*When the Ravens croak, or any other Ominous thing happens, let not any Superstitious Fancies disturb or affright you: But have immediate recourse to this Distinction, for the quieting your Fears, That nothing of this kind can Bode Ill to you: To your Body, or your Estate, or your Reputation, or your Wife, or your Children, 'tis possible it may; but as for your Self, 'tis in your own power to make every thing auspicious to you; because whatever Disaster happens in any of the fore-mentioned Respects, you may, if you please, reap some very considerable Advantage from it.*

## COMMENT.

**T**HIS Chapter seems to me to be misplaced, and would be more Methodical, if set before the former, and immediately after that which begins with *If you see a Neighbour in Tears &c.* For having told us there, that a Man ought not to be too sensibly affected with the excessive Passion of those, who think themselves

selves unhappy for the loss of any of the Comforts of this World, nor sympathize so far, as to imagine, that such a one is really Miserable upon any of these Accounts, since a Man's Happiness or his Wretchedness does not consist in any outward Prosperous or Adverse Events, but purely in the use of his own Free-Will, and the Practice or Neglect of what God and Nature have made entirely the Object of his own Choice and Power; here he adds, that if any inauspicious Bird, or other Omen seem to portend Mischiefs and Ill-luck, this ought not to terrify or discompose us. But though we should suppose them to carry any ill portent to our Bodies or our Fortunes, yet we must distinguish between these and our selves; and should consider, that our own Happiness and Misery depends upon our own Disposal, and can come from nothing but our selves.

Do but resolve then not to make your self unhappy, and all the most direful Significations of Misfortune, and all the Misfortunes consequent to those Significations, shall never be able to do it. Your Body, 'tis true, may be Sick, or Die; your Reputation may be Blasted, your Estate Destroyed or Wasted, your Wife or Children taken from you; but still all this does not reach your Self; that is, your Reasoning Mind. This can never be Miserable, nay, it must and will be Happy, in despite of all these Ill-bodings, except you consent to your own Wretchedness: For all your Good and Evil depends wholly upon your self.

Nay, which is more, and the greatest Security imaginable, these very Misfortunes shall conspire to render you yet more Happy; for out of this Bitter you may gather Sweetness, and convert what is generally mistaken for Misery, to your own mighty Benefit. And the greater those Calamities are, the more considerable will the Advantage be, provided you manage them prudently, and behave your self decently under them. Now it is plain from hence, that these are not

Evils,

Evils, ( properly speaking, ) for whatever is so, must always do hurt, and can never change its Nature so far, as to contribute to any good effect. Since then these may be so ordered, as to become subservient to your Good, and since no Ill can come to you, but what your self must be instrumental in, and necessary to; you must of necessity grant, that all Omens, and all the Evils threatned by them, are not, cannot be Evils to you your self, unless you please to make them so; and that all they can pretend to, is to affect something that belongs, or bears some distant Relation, to you.

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## C H A P. XXV.

*It is in your power always to come off Conqueror, provided you will never engage in any Combats, but such whose Successes will be determined by your own Choice.*

## C O M M E N T.

**H**E had said just before, that no Ominous Predictions Boded any ill to Men, except they brought the Evil upon themselves, because it is in the power of every one not to be Miserable. And this Chapter I take to be a farther Prosecution of that Argument, and added by way of Proof and Confirmation to the former.

For it is in our own power, never to enter the Lists with any External Accidents, that is, so to restrain our Desires and Aversions, as not to concern our selves with them; for if we stake our Happiness upon the Success of such an Encounter, we must needs retire with Loss; because such Desires will meet

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with frequent Disappointments, and such Aversions cannot always deliver us from the Dangers we fear. Let all our Combats therefore be confined to our selves, and such things as Nature hath put in the power of our own Wills; for when you strive with your own Desires, and Aversions, and Opinions, the Prize is in your own Hands, and you may rest secure of Danger or Disappointment. This he had shewn at large formerly, and this is in effect the same thing, as to say, that a Man shall never be vanquished, but always come off triumphantly.

And if this be true, then it is no less evidently so, that it is in a Man's own Power never to be Miserable: For he that is Miserable, is a Subdued Man; and, if it depend upon one's own Choice, whether any Evil shall happen to him, then it must needs be in his own Breast too, whether any Omens or Predictions shall portend Ill to him. So that *Epictetus* had reason, when he pronounced so peremptorily, that no inauspicious Events are signified to any Man, unless himself conspire to make them so: That is, unless he engage in such Disputes as he is not qualified for, and where the Victory is doubtful at least, if not sure to go against him. And this is done by every one, who overlooks his own Mind, and places his Happiness and Unhappiness in the Events of Fortune, and the Affairs of the World.

## C H A P. XXVI.

*Take heed, when you see any Person advanced to an eminent Station of Honour or Power, or any other kind of Prosperity, that you be not presently surpris'd with a false Idea of his Condition, and rashly pronounce him Happy. For, if all the Happiness*

*piness and Tranquillity of our Minds depend upon things within our own power, there can be no room for Envy or Emulation. And you your self, when you consider, do not desire to be a General, or a Senator, or a Consul, but to be free and easie. Now the only way to be so, is to despise the World, and every thing that is out of your own power.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**H E only Method of insuring a Conquest upon all Encounters, the last Chapter told us, is never to engage with what is out of our own power. But because we are exceeding apt to be drawn into such Conflicts, and by nothing more indeed, than, by the Examples of other Persons that seem to be Prosperous and Happy, and the Envy and Emulation that usually follows upon such occasions; therefore he shews us here very briefly, that no body, who makes the real Happiness of a Man his serious Study, and sincere Endeavour, is capable of Envy or Emulation, and that it were utterly inconsistent with his Principles, to be guilty of either.

For if the proper Happiness of a Man depends upon the use of his Free-Will, and those things that are subjected to it, and the Persons who are promoted to Power and Honour, and courted with popular Applause and Admiration, have not in all this any of those Advantages, which Nature hath put in our own power, it is manifest, that these seemingly Happy Men are not in reality such; nor have they, by this Advancement, attained to any degree of that which is the peculiar and true Happiness of Humane Nature. What occasion then can all these flattering Appearances give for Envy or Emulation? For Envy is properly the repining at anothers Happiness; and Emulation, is an impatient Desire of raising our selves

up to an Equality with others, who exceed us in something which we take for Happiness.

Now the Original Cause of these Passions is rooted in our Nature and Constitution ; which determines us to thirst after Honour and Esteem, and is uneasy when we come behind any of our Equals. Hence it is, that Men of mean Souls, and Vulgar Attainments, and such as despair of advancing themselves by the strength of their own Worth, endeavour to undermine, and detract from, others of better Desert, that so they may rise upon their Ruins. And to such ungenerous Tempers, no consideration is so afflicting, as the good Successes of their Neighbours ; And in this Vile Disposition the very Essence of Envy consists. For Envy steals in upon the Prosperous, or those that are esteemed so ; but especially, if those Persons are upon the same level with our selves, either in respect of their Birth, or Fortune, or Profession, or other Accomplishments. For Persons either very much above, or very much below our selves, are not the Object of our Envy. Because these are not a match for us, but the one sort excite our Admiration, and the other provoke our Contempt.

But where Nature hath given a greater strength of Parts, and a more active and generous Disposition, there Men feel a gallant warmth of Soul, which exerts it self vigorously, and struggles to come up to the perfection of others, by virtue of ones own Merit, without any invidious Arts of lessening theirs : Nay, not only to come up with them, but to outstrip them in the Race, and bear away the Prize. From the difference then of these Two Tempers, and the Practices consequent to them, we may plainly perceive, that Envy, is a Vicious Passion, and no Qualification can render it otherwise. But Emulation is sometimes commendable, and nearly related to the Love of Goodness, when Vertue is the thing we strive to excel in ; but it degenerates into Vice, and is little better than Envy,

when



when the Advantages of Fortune, and the World, are the Prize we contend for.

Since therefore Good is the proper Object of Envy and Emulation, and Preference in Honour, or Power, or Reputation, is only mistaken for such by the Vulgar, but can really be no such thing; because none of these fall within our own Choice; it is plain, that in Men who examine Matters nicely, there can be no such Passion as Envy and Emulation excited, upon any of these Accounts. And consequently, these are Resentments most unbecoming a Man that makes Wisdom and Vertue his Study, because they plainly argue, that, while he accounts such Persons worthy of his Envy or Emulation, he does likewise expect to find his Happiness in these Advantages which they enjoy. And this contradicts the very first Principles of Philosophy, and is inconsistent with the Character he pretends to. For the thing that ought to be first in his Desires, is Liberty, the breaking those Chains his Passions have bound him in, and getting loose from all the Incumbrances of the World. And the only way to deliver himself from this Bondage, is to slight and disdain the World, and to assert his Native Freedom from all those external Accidents, those Rivals in his Affections, that subdued and enslaved his Mind. For these only have the power to vanquish and captivate him, by disappointing his Hopes and Expectations, and oppressing him with the Calamities he fears. Upon these it is, that our Brutish Inclinations let themselves loose, and from hence comes all that remorseless Tyranny which they usurp, and so arbitrarily exercise, over us. The Contempt of the World, therefore, is the most effectual Method of reducing all into Order again; for by a brave and just scorn of these outward Objects, we weaken the Desires that lead to them; And when once those Succours are intercepted and cut off, those cannot stand alone, but fall in of course, and submit themselves to Reason.

## C H A P. XXVII.

*Remember that when any Man Reviles or Strikes you, it is not the Tongue that gives you the Opprobrious Language, or the Hand that deals the Blow, that injures or affronts you; but it is your own Resentment of it, as an Injury or Affront, that makes it such to you. When therefore you are provoked, this is owing entirely to your own Apprehensions of the thing. And especially guard your self well against the first impressions, for if you can but so far subdue your Passion, as to gain time for cooler Thoughts, you will easily attain to a good Government of your self afterwards.*

## C H A P. XXVIII.

*But be sure to keep Death, Persecution, and Banishment, and all those Calamities, which Mankind are most afraid of, constantly before your Eyes, and let them be very familiar to your Mind. But above all, let Death be ever present there: For you will find this a most excellent Remedy against base and mean Thoughts, and a powerful restraint to all immoderate Desires.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**fter having again exposed the Vanity of all those imaginary Happineſſes, which Men depend upon the World for; and shewed us, that a Gallant and Generous Disdain of these, is the only possible means of setting our Souls at Liberty, and living easie; he proceeds in the next place, to take off all those formidable

midable Objections, which Men are either apt to raise merely for Discourse sake, or used to feel the discouraging effects of in themselves, while they are yet but raw and untrained in the Discipline of Wisdom and Vertue. And in this he observes his former Method of having recourse to his first Principles of Morality.

The Sum of what the Objectors have to say, is this, That such a Contempt and Neglect of the World, how Great and Gay soever they may look at first; is yet really attended with many Inconveniences; for it renders Men Despicable and Cheap, keeps them Impotent and Low, and lays them open to all the Infolencies and Injuries imaginable, while they are neither in a capacity to repel the Wrongs that are done them by Force, nor can descend so low, as to prevent them by Flattery, and Servile Applications. When People see this, there is no Indignity that they have not ill Nature enough to offer; no Liberty that they will not give themselves; Nor Tongue, nor Hand will know any Restraint. And thus we see daily, that when Men have got the Ascendant, there is nothing they stick at, they wound such unresisting Philosophical Persons, in their Reputation with Slanders and Reproaches; offer Violence and Indignities to their Persons; treat them with all manner of Contumely and Scorn; oppress them in their Estates, drive them from their Dwellings, clap them into Prisons, make them fly their Country, and, as if all this were too little, sometimes take away their very Lives too. Now, Who would choose to be thus trampled upon, and not only choose, but make a Vertue of it too? a Vertue that provokes the most barbarous Injustice and all manner of Affronts, and leaves a Man naked and defenceless to them all?

To all this, *Epictetus* replies in short, that there is nothing grievous or terrible in all this dismal Representation; for if there were, all the World would a-

gree in esteeming it so. But in truth, the only thing that carries Terror in it, is the Opinion we entertain of these Injuries being such. So that the affront is not from the Action of the Person that offers, but from the Opinion of the Person thatresents, it; And consequently, we expose and injure our selves; for these Opinions are our own Act and Deed.

Now, that Reproach and Slanders are no such mighty Affliction, nor what ought to move our Indignation, and disquiet our Minds, will very easily be made appear: For, they must be either true or false; If the former, why so very loth, and so very much displeased to hear the Truth? Our Shame in this case comes too late, and we should have done much better in hating to commit the Fact, than in hating to be told of it afterwards. But if what is said of us be false, it is the Reporter, and not we, that are the worse for it.

What Course then is to be taken in this case? He tells you the Remedy is, Not to let this Affront make too sudden and sensible Impressions upon you, nor provoke you to Lamentations and Complaints, as if you thought your self unhappy upon this Account; but to give your self Leisure to recollect, and consider the true Nature of the Thing calmly and coolly: For if you once can gain time, and defend your self against the Surprize of the Thing, you will live easie and quiet, and your Mind will be in a Condition to weigh and apply the Principles of Philosophy, and distinguish, whether this Accident be any thing within your own Power or not; And, when you find it to be somewhat that your Will cannot command, the Result of this will presently be, to conclude, that neither your Happiness or Unhappiness can depend upon it; and that, be it as bad as it is possible to suppose, yet you have it in your Power, to convert it to an excellent Use, and, by a true Elevation of Soul, that expresses a decent Contempt of the World, and all its Malice,

Malice, to reap great Advantages from such cross Accidents as these.

Now the best Expedient for Evenness of Temper is Custom. And therefore, upon any such provoking Occasion, there is no Preservative against false Notions and immoderate Resentments, like Silence, and refusing to give one's Passion vent; and though it may boil and foam within, yet still to stifle the Fire, till we feel its Heat abate; and not let loose the Dog, till he have done snarling. And this Practice is recommended to us particularly by the Example of *Socrates*, who was taken notice of, for never speaking a Word, when any thing anger'd him.

What *Epictetus* says upon this Subject, and that which follows in the next Chapter, have, in my Opinion, so close a Coherence, that they ought to be connected by that Particle *But*, which seems to me by no Means redundant, but a very significant Conjunction in this place. Thus then the Author carries on his Argument; *But as for Death and Exile, and all those Calamities which Mankind are usually afraid of, be sure to keep these constantly before your Eyes; and so on.*

For, having proved concerning all External Events in general, even the dismallest and dreadfullest of them all, that there was not any thing formidable or injurious in the Nature of the Things themselves, but that this is entirely owing to Mens own Notions and Resentments of them, he prescribes Caution, and Leisure, and cooler Consideration, as the best Remedy against such Impressions, and particularly against our being enraged at, or dejected under, any Vexations or cross Accidents. But he directs to another sort of Application, against Death, and Exile, and such Misfortunes, as are of the first and most formidable Kind, which is to bear them continually in mind, and live in Expectation of them every Moment, as Things that may come at any time, and some of which most certainly will come, at one time

or other. For when once Reason hath convinced us, that these Things are not really such as make a Man one whit the better, or the worse; and when customary Meditation hath reconciled us to them, taken off all their Terror, and rendred the Thoughts of them easie and familiar to the Soul, we presently look upon the most dreadful of them all, as Things frequent and common; and by this means feel both our Spirits supported against the Terrors of the World, and our Affections much moderated, and weaned from the Pleasures of it.

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### C H A P. XXIX.

*If you resolve to make Wisdom and Vertue the Study and Business of your Life, you must be sure to arm your self before-hand against all the Inconveniences and Discouragements, that are like to attend this Resolution. Imagine that you shall meet with many Scoffs, and much Derision; and that People will upbraid you with turning Philosopher all on the sudden; and ask in Scorn, What is the meaning of all this affected Gravity, and these disdainful Looks? But be not you affected, or supercilious, only stick close to whatever you are in your Judgment convinced is vertuous and becoming; and consider this as your proper Station, assigned you by God, which you must not quit upon any Terms. And remember, That if you persevere in Goodness, those very Men, who derided you at first, will afterwards turn your Admirers. But if you give way to their Reproaches, and are vanquished by them, you will then render your self doubly, and most deservedly, ridiculous.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE former Advice extended to all Mankind in general, and concerned them as Men ; there he had very largely dissuaded them from engaging in the Affairs of the World, and all the Disquiets and Superstitious Fears about them ; in consideration, that these are remote and forein, out of our Reach and Disposal ; and, that a Man must look at home for all that is properly Good or Evil, this being the peculiar Prerogative of a Rational and Free Agent, that all its Happiness and Misery depends upon itself alone. But now he takes another Method, and addresses himself particularly to such, as have made some Advances in Wisdom and Goodness, and are affected with a real Love and Desire of it. And here his first Care is, to secure the Approaches, and first Efforts of such a Desire, by giving timely Warning of the Difficulties it may probably encounter, lest the Surprise of any sudden and unforeseen Opposition should disturb the Mind, and break its Measures.

Now nothing is more usual, than for Men to take it ill, when any of their Companions leave a way of Living, to which they have been long accustomed. And the Method they take for expressing such Resentments, is, sometimes by exposing and ridiculing them, that so the World may think their own Courses, at least as good, as those they use with such rude Insolence and Contempt : And this is commonly the Treatment Men who take better Courses meet with from their old Cronies and intimate Acquaintants. Sometimes they do it, by reproaching them with Arrogance and Pride, and valuing themselves upon their Philosophy more than they ought to do. And this proceeds partly from Anger, and partly from Envy, and a malicious Desire to obstruct their farther Progress.

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And indeed, this spiteful Dealing does but too often meet with its desired Success; for many Persons are overcome with these Reproaches, and desert their Post, and relapse into their former Follies, merely to deliver themselves from such Teazings. Some of these Derisions are exprest in contemptuous Looks and Gestures, and they are properly Mockeries. Others do not content themselves with Apish Figures and ill Language, but run Men upon Precipices, and draw both those that would fain be good, and all that take their part, and assist them in so necessary a Reformation, into real Difficulties, and great Dangers. And if this were done by Strangers only, it were something more tolerable; but their own Friends and Relations have oftentimes the greatest Hand in it. These do it upon an idle Pretence, That a Philosophical Retirement renders Men useless, and lost to the World; and Others do it, partly out of Envy against a Life so infinitely more happy and commendable than their own; and partly out of a Resentment, that this will make Them, and Their way of Conversation despised, by those that have exchanged it for a better.

Nor must it be dissembled, that there is sometimes too just ground for the latter of these Reasons; for we very often see Men, whose good Dispositions and happy Temper incline them to Wisdom and Vertue, (while they are not arrived to any Mastery or Perfection in it, but only big with the Hope of attaining to it in time) exalted with Self-conceit, and full of Disdain, as if They only had all Perfection, and other People none at all. When, in truth, this mighty Opinion proceeds only from want of Discretion and Judgment, and is the most undeniable Evidence against such Men, that they really have not that which they with so much Confidence pretend to. For there is not in the whole World any thing more inconsistent with Wisdom and Vertue, than an haughty superci-

supercilious Carriage, and that swelling Vanity, which disdains and neglects that excellent and most divine Rule of *Knowing ones Self*: A Rule, that is in truth, the Sum and Substance of all Philosophy, the first Principle, and the last and highest Precept in it.

When Men behave themselves with so much Pride and Ostentation, the World think the Character of Philosophers suits very ill with them. For this Exaltation does not proceed from any true Gallantry or Greatness of Soul, but is a vain Tumour, that draws ill Humours to it from within, and swells to an unnatural Bulk; an Excrescence, that causes Deformity, and proceeds from some Disease. Whereas true Greatness and Strength of Mind, like that of the Body, results from a good Disposition of the Parts, is distributed equally and regularly through the whole Mass, and preserves a due Temper, and mutual good Assistance, between the Parts within, and those without.

Against this Distemper, he cautions all that make Philosophy their Study, as against a Thing detested by all Mankind, and that which gives a just Provocation to Malice, and exposes a Man to all the mischievous Effects of it. But when all due Care hath been taken to get clear of this Folly; then a Man ought to harden himself against all Scoffs and Reproaches, with the Consideration of the Dignity of Humane Nature, and what is decent and agreeable to so excellent a Being; and then to persevere in the Choice of Virtue, in despite of all Opposition to the contrary; and in a full Persuasion, that these good Resolutions and Desires are the Motions and Impulses of a Divine Power. For, in truth, Philosophy is the noblest and most valuable Blessing, that ever God bestowed upon Mankind.

The Excellence of the Thing is confessed by these very Scoffers themselves, who, when they reproach us with pretending to an Accomplishment above us,

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do at the same time express the high Esteem they have for it; and, by not allowing any Man to profess himself a Philosopher on a sudden, they expose indeed the Arrogance and Forwardness of the Persons that presume to do so; but then withal they acknowledge this to be an Attainment, that requires much Time, and great Application. Now these very Men, who resent the Vanity of bold Pretenders with so much Indignation, and express their Honour of Philosophy that way; will discern the Beauty and Majesty of it much better, and admire it ten thousand times more, when they behold its Effects, in the modest Conversation of one who constantly improves, and perseveres in being resolutely and obstinately virtuous, in despite of all the Scoffs and Discouragements, by which they attempted, in vain, to draw him off. But the Man that yields tamely to their Reproaches, and, upon that Account, desists from his good Purposes, and compounds for his Quiet by returning to his former Courses, he renders himself doubly ridiculous. The Jest and Scorn, that passed upon such a one at first, were what he had really no Concern in, but the Reproach must return all upon the Authors themselves, and none of their Aspersions would stick, so long as he proceeded in a generous Neglect of them, and by degrees was preparing to change their Scorn into Admiration and Esteem. But the suffering ones self to be vanquished by their Malice, does not only justify their first Insolence, by quitting our former Pretensions, and falling so low, after looking so high; thus vainly attempting to reconcile Philosophy with a mean and sordid Temper; But it also provokes Contempt upon another Account, that of being subdued by such base and despicable Enemies, and letting a senseless Flear or a malicious Jest, beat one off from that Post of Virtue, which God and Wisdom had assigned to him. Most justly therefore does this poor-spirited Wretch deserve a double Portion of Scorn, the

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Scorn of wise and good Men, after having submitted to that of Fools and Knaves; which could have done him no Harm at all, in case he had persisted in his Duty; but returns upon him with double Force, and is render'd most reasonable and due, by his own Inconstancy and Desertion.

These Considerations are abundantly sufficient, to inspire any Mind that is not utterly sunk into Feebleness and Effeminacy, with generous Resolutions to persevere in Goodness, and hold out against all manner of Opposition. And in this there is one very considerable Advantage, That even our Passions commence good Dispositions, and the natural Ambition every Man hath after Honour and Fame, becomes upon this Occasion an Assistant to Vertue: It adds Strength and Vigour to Reason, and is refined and exalted by it. For thus we come to a true Notion of Honour; we covet it no longer for its own sake, nor are proud of it upon the Account of the Persons who pay the Respect, and so place our Happiness upon something without us: But we value it as a Mark and Testimony of real Vertue and Desert. And therefore the Honour, which a Man ought to be satisfied with, is by no means that which comes from the Applause of the Rabble, and unthinking part of the World, who often mistake Mens Characters; but that which is founded upon the Commendation of the Wise and the Good; For These know how to discern between Persons, and their respective Merits; And the Testimony of such is what may be depended upon, without any Danger of being led into false Judgments by it.

## CHAP. XXX.

*If you ever happen to accommodate your self to the Humours of the World, for the sake of Reputation and Applause; take notice, that this is below a Philosopher. And therefore content your self upon all Occasions with really being what you would be thought. But if you will needs be thought so too, deserve your own good Opinion, and that will be sufficient.*

## C O M M E N T.

**W**E were told before, That when once a Man's Judgment is convinced of his Duty, he ought constantly to persevere in it; to look upon this as the particular Post, and Character, which Providence hath appointed him to fill: That, however Men may run down Goodness for a while, yet the Resolute and Brave break through all that, and in time gain the Admiration of their Enemies and Deriders; but the Tame and the Fickle, that sink under the Reproaches of ill Men, draw down a just Scorn, and a double Shame upon themselves. Now to all this he adds, That, for a Man to forsake his Principles, and consult, not so much his own Judgment as the Humour of the World, thereby to render himself acceptable to others; is a Weakness of which a Philosopher must not be guilty. It being a fix'd Rule to all such, That their only Care ought to be, to recommend themselves to their own Consciences, and Almighty God.

*Therefore, says he, content your self with being a Philosopher; which is but another Name for a Good Man. But if the being so alone seem too little, and you desire, that your Light should shine abroad, and People see*

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and be sensible of your Vertue, ( As indeed it is the Nature of Goodness, to discover its Beauties and shed its Lustre, and a Man can with better Confidence take Satisfaction in his own Vertues, when they are conspicuous and acknowledged ; ) then, says he, do not fix your Eye upon the World, nor be solicitous to please the Multitude ; for these are but very incompetent Judges of such Matters: But rather strive to approve your self to your own Breast, and let the Sense and Consciousness of your own Vertue satisfy you. For a Man that hath attained to some good measure of Philosophy, ( and such a one, you must observe *Epicetus* applies himself to at present ) will be sure, both to act consistently with his Principles, while he makes it his Business to approve himself to his own Conscience ; and he will also secure a more discerning and impartial Judge of his Actions, when they are to be tried by his own Reason, than if he appealed to the Judgment of the World.

And here it may be proper to take notice, how different this Advice is from something which was said before ; all which, in truth, depends upon the Difference of the Persons concerned in it. There he address'd his Discourse to a Young Beginner, one who was but just entering upon the Study of Philosophy ; and to him the Counsel thought fit to be given, was *Do not affect to be thought Wise* ; because, Persons in his Circumstances are strangely fond of Fame and Applause, transported beyond Measure with Noise and empty Breath, and not only too credulously vain upon the false Judgments of others, but unqualified, as yet, to pass any true Judgment upon themselves. But at present he hath a good Proficient to deal with, one that is better dispos'd to act upon a Principle, and follow the Dictates of his own Reason : And therefore to such a one his Advice is, That he would content himself with being what he should be ; but if he will needs be thought so too, he is now in a Condition to

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make a just Estimate of himself, and therefore may be satisfied with his own Approbation.

This seems to be the true Importance of the Chapter : Though possibly there may be another very convenient Sense of it too. For this Great Man, very probably, designed it as a necessary Caution, (As indeed he generally takes care to prevent any Misconstructions, that his Expressions may be liable to. ) Now by saying in the former Chapter, *That those who expose Vertue at first, will afterwards admire the Resolute and Constant in it ; but the Men who yielded to those Reproaches deserve to be doubly scorn'd ;* he might be thought to propound the Opinion and Esteem of the World, as the principal Motive to Goodness ; And therefore here he retracts that, and takes off all such Suspicions, by calling away the Soul from the Pursuit of Fame and Reputation abroad, as that which is apt to corrupt her Principles, and make a Man more industrious to please others than himself. And in Opposition to this, he would have a Man gain his own Approbation ; for the Judgment a wise Man makes of himself is less subject to Partiality, and Prejudice, and Vanity, and of greater Use in the Encouragement it gives to Vertue, than that of the World can possibly be. For the being approved and commended by Wise and Good Judges, is the most satisfactory and convincing Evidence, that a Man is truly Vertuous. Now the Person to whom *Epictetus* speaks in this Place, is supposed to be such a Judge ; and upon this Presumption I imagine it is, that he says in the Close of the Chapter, *Do but deserve your own good Opinion, and that is enough in all Conscience.*



## CHAP. XXXI.

*Never perplex your self with anxious Thoughts like these; I shall lead a wretched obscure Life, without any Name, or Notice taken of me. For if you suppose ( as this Complaint evidently does ) that Obscurity and Disrespect is an Evil, consider that it is no more in the power of any but your self to bring any Evil upon you, than it is to bring any Baseness or Dishonesty upon you. But besides, pray consider, Was it any part of your proper Business, to be chosen into a Place of Command, or to be admitted to, or caressed at, publick Entertainments? You must allow it was not. Where is the Disrespect then? and what just Reflection can it be upon you, if you are not? Besides, why should you say, you shall be despised, and have no Name or Notice taken of you, when your Business lies wholly in Matters at the disposal of your own Will, and for which consequently you have it in your own power to make your self as valuable as you please? But your Friends will be never the better for you. What do you call being never the better? You will not furnish them with Money, nor have Interest enough to give them the Privileges of Citizens of Rome. And why should you trouble your self for this? Who told you, that this was ever incumbent upon you; or one of those Things in your own power, which you ought to look upon as a Duty? Or how can it be expected, you should bestow that upon another, which you are not possesst of your self. But your Friends will*

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answer, Pray get it then. that you may impart to us. *Tes, I will, with all my Heart, provided you can direct me, how I may attain these Things, and at the same time preserve my Integrity, and Modesty, and true Greatness of Soul, inviolate. But if you desire me to part with my own real Good, that I may procure you some imaginary one only; this is the greatest Injustice, and the greatest Folly imaginable. And which of these do you esteem the more valuable; Money, or a true, virtuous, and modest Friend; Therefore it would better become you to assist my Vertue, than to expect such Things from me, as cannot be had, but at the Expence of that. But it will be objected again, That your Country receives no Advantages from you. What Advantage do you mean? You will not build publick Portico's nor Bagnio's, nor Exchanges? And what if you do not? Does your Country expect to be furnished with Arms from a Shoe-maker, or Shoes from a Smith? Surely, if every one do it Service in his own Way, this is all that can in Reason be required. And shall you then be thought to have done it none, if you make an honest and good Patriot? No sure; you are very far from being an Useless Member of the Commonwealth, when you do so. Well, but what Rank then, what Place (you'll say) shall you have in the Commonwealth? Why truly, even just such a one, as is consistent with your Integrity and Modesty. But if once you part with these, upon a Pretence of promoting the Publick Good; know, that you are less capable of serving your Country, when you are grown Knaveish and Impudent.*

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## C O M M E N T.

When Men apply themselves to the Study and Practice of Vertue, and are convinced, that nothing so well deserves their Care, as the Improvement of their Minds, many Difficulties offer themselves, to shake these Resolutions. And, as Men differ in their Circumstances, so these Objections present themselves differently, both to disquiet their own Thoughts, and to evacuate the Good Advice of others. To the Young Beginners, whose Minds have not yet purged off the Dross of the World, such mean and sordid Reflections as these are apt to step in; *If I neglect my Business and Estate, I and my Family shall starve; and except I take the Trouble of punishing my Servant, my Indulgence will be his Ruin.* But to those who have made any considerable Progress, those Objections appear Despicable and Low; they are above such trifling Considerations, and while they are doing their Duty, can trust Providence for a Provision. But then at the same time, they are concerned for the discharge of all those good Offices, that may be expected from them; and think, that both the intrinsic Goodness of the thing, and the Honour that attends it, will abundantly justify such a Concern. For their Desires are Generous and Noble; they aim at nothing else but true Honour; they decline Infamy and Obscurity, and propose to themselves the Advantage of their Friends, and the Service of their Country: And from these Topicks, they start some Objections, which *Epicetetus* here undertakes to examine and refute particularly.

And First of all, he applies himself to that General one of Obscurity or Disgrace; that if a Man retire from the Gainful Employments and Business of the World, or quit his Practice at the Bar;

*Where Eloquence acquires a just and lasting Fame*

( as *Homer* observes ) it must be his hard fate to be buried alive, without any Respect paid, or notice taken of him.

Now this Objection *Epictetus* takes off most effectually, by the following Syllogisms : Disgrace is an Evil, and Evil as well as Good, is something within our own power. But whatever is so, no other but our selves, can bring upon us. Therefore when any Man is really in Disgrace, this is in, and by, and from himself, whether others disrespect him, or whether they do not. So that the Disgrace from others, is what we have no just cause to fear, nor indeed ought it to pass for Disgrace in our Opinion, if Disgrace be allowed to be Evil ; for then it must by consequence too be our own Act and Deed.

This is the Sum of the Argument ; and now if you please, let us examine the several Propositions whereof it consists. First of all, Disgrace or Obscurity, ( says he ) is an Evil : Now if Honour be ( as all Men sure will allow it to be ) a Good, Disgrace, and any thing that is Dishonourable, must needs be Evil : For if it were Good, it would cease to be Dishonourable, and be valued and esteemed. But, besides the consent of all Mankind in this notion of Honour, this very thing proves it to be Good, that it is what we account most properly to belong to the best Persons and Things. For Honour is attributed to God, to Blessed Spirits, and to the most excellent of the Sons of Men, as their strict and just due, as the best acknowledgement we can pay for their Merit and Goodness. So that Dishonour must needs be an Evil upon this Account also ; for, where one Contrary belongs to one Extream, the other Contrary will belong to the distant Extream ; and this, is the Case of Honour and Dishonour, with regard to Good and Evil.

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The next thing to be proved would be, that this is a thing wholly in our own power, but this I presume is done already. For there hath been so much said in the former part of this Treatise, to shew, that all the Good and Evil, properly so called, that can fall upon Rational and Free Agents, must needs depend upon the Liberty of their own Choice; and, that nothing which does not fall withing a Man's own Disposal, can in true and strict Speaking, be called Good or Evil; that it is to be hoped, there is no need of repeating those Arguments any more. But now, if Disgrace, and want of Honour, be our own Act, and what depends upon none, and comes from none, but our selves when we lye under it; a Man may absolutely despise and neglect the World, without incurring any real Dishonour upon that account. You will say indeed, this excludes him from Places of Dignity and Respect, that it hinders him from making a Figure and Interest in his Country, that he sits at Home, and eats in Private. But then I must ask you again, whether the Office of a Lord Mayor, or a Member of Parliament, whether the City-Fests, or the Caresses of the World, are things in our own Disposal, and such as any Man can give himself when he pleases? You must grant me they are not; and from thence I infer, that no Man is really unhappy for the want of them; and consequently that Obscurity, and want of publick Honour, of which these are alledged, as the discouraging Inconveniences, is no Evil or Unhappines neither.

Now, as to meaning of what follows, ( there seems to be some difficulty in that short Sentence, *It is no more in the power of any but your self, to bring any Evil upon you, than it is to bring Vileness or Dishonesty upon you.* ) For this, *not being in the power of any other Person to bring any Evil upon a Man,* seems to be urged from a proof more evident than it self; and the Insinuation here is, that as the Decency of an Action is more

easily discerned, than the real and intrinsick Goodness; (for it is by its Comeliness and Beauty, that Vertue recommends it self, and invites us to its Embraces, and engages our Affection,) so also the Vileness and Dishonesty is more visible than the Immorality and Evil. Now Vileness or Turpitude is properly applied to an undue use of Pleasures and Sensual Delights; and this abuse can be the effect of no other thing but Choice, because the indulging those Pleasures is purely our own Act. It is therefore no more in the power of any other Person to bring Evil upon a Man, than to bring Vileness or Dishonesty upon him; and Evil it is plain he cannot, for a Man has no more power to engage us in Vice, than he has to engage us in base and unbecoming Practices; and Evil both of Crime and Misery, is as much in his own free Disposal, as Turpitude and Dishonesty: So that, if a Man cannot be brought into this latter by another, and if he can no more be brought into Evil, than into That, it follows, that he cannot be brought into Evil at all by another.

But possibly the place may be clearer, and a more full and expedient Sense found out, if we transpose that Negative Particle, that so the Sentence may run thus, It is impossible for any Person to be made Miserable by any other; nay, much more so, than to be made Vile and Base by him; that so the strength and stress of the whole Argument, may lie upon that note of Comparison. And this Conjecture, as well as the whole Interpretation grounded upon it, seems to carry a great deal of Truth, if we attend to the Notions, upon which the Masters of Reason and Oratory proceed in these Matters; for they define Honesty and Turpitude, by that which is Praise or Blameworthy, and so make Decency and Vileness to depend upon the Judgment of the World. But of things profitable or Hurtful, and Good and Evil, they give us a very different Account; for these they tell us, have

have a distinguishing Character founded in Nature, and are not so precarious, as to depend on the Opinions or Determinations of Men. Now according to this Notion, which allows so much to the Commendations of Men, and makes Dishonesty to consist in the Condemnation and dislike of the World, he says, a Man must admit, that it is at least as impossible for another to bring Evil upon him, as it is to bring Dishonesty. And if, (as was proved before, ) this cannot be done, much less can that ; and so the Conclusion is still the same, that it is utterly impossible to be done at all.

But then again, What occasion, ( says he ) is there for that Complaint of living without *any Name or Notice taken of you* ? Is there no way of becoming Eminent, but by appearing in some Office of Authority, and being advanced to the Administration of Publick Business ? Alas ! poor Man, you have forgot it seems, that this is not the Field, where Humane Good and Evil, the proper and peculiar Happiness or Misery of our Nature is to be contended for. The Desires and Aversions of your Mind, the Actions of your Life, and in a word, the Management of your Freedom, and what is left to its Disposal, these are the Lists which you must enter for that Prize : And this is a Combat, in which if you behave your self Gallantly, and act as uncorrupt Nature, and right Reason, would direct, you may render your self highly valuable and conspicuous. Why then do you complain of Obscurity and Contempt, when you have the Post of Honour within your self, and may become as Signal and Eminent in it as you please ? Why indeed ? But because you have not yet unlearned the Folly of placing your Happiness in Foreign and External Advantages, such as it is one necessary Qualification of every one, who would be a Philosopher in good earnest, to neglect and despise.

Well, but allowing, ( says the Objector ) that I may signalize my self never so much, yet still this is but



a private Satisfaction, it gives one no Credit nor Influence in the World, and my Friends are never the better for my Merit. This now is a Pretence calculated for one who hath made some competent Proficiency in Wisdom and Vertue: It argues the Man to have got above all fordid seekings of his own Interest, and to value the World and its Advantages, no longer for the sake of himself, but in kindness to his Friends. The Assisting of them, he looks upon as a Good and Gallant Action, and therefore allows himself in the pursuit of Wealth, and Power, and Interest, to prevent his being an useles and unprofitable part of the Creation, and to render the Good he hath, as diffusive as may be.

This Objection too, *Epictetus* removes by Two Arguments; the First proceeds upon the distinction of things within our own Power; the Other urges, that a Man who retains his Vertue and Fidelity, and all the good Qualities that create and preserve a true Friendship, is more serviceable and beneficial to his Friends, than if he should enrich or promote them, when the power of doing so was purchased at the Expence of those good Qualities.

From the Distinction of Things in our Power, he argues, that Riches, and Honours, and Preferments, are none of them, which Nature hath left within the Disposal of our own Wills: If therefore it happen at any time, that a Wise and Good Man be possessed of these Advantages, let him impart to others liberally; nay, let him esteem the Opportunity of doing Good, a greater kindness to himself, than to the Person that receives it from him. But if it be not his Fortune to be placed in such Circumstances, this is no Reflection upon his Vertue, or any Disparagement to his Kindness and good Intentions: He is not one whit the worse Man in himself, nor the less a Friend to others. For (as *Epictetus* says,) what Madness is it to expect that a Man should give that to us, which he is not possessed of himself? But

But pray get these things, say your Friends, that we may partake of them with you. Yes with all my Heart, if I can get them, and not lose my self. Do but order Matters so, that I may still retain my Fidelity and my Innocence, and not bring any aspersion upon the Characters I pretend to, viz. Those of a Friend and a Philosopher; and when you have thus smoothed the way, give your Directions, and I will not fail to follow them. Now by this Answer, our Author seems plainly to allow a Liberty, both, of endeavouring to improve an Estate, and to embrace publick Offices and Honours; provided those Riches and Honours may be acquired and enjoyed, without being engaged in any thing inconsistent with Vertue, or unbecoming our Character. But if this be an impossible Condition as it too often proves; if the Corruption of the World be such, that a Man who makes it his Business to acquire these Advantages, do at the same time bring himself under a manifest hazard, if not a fatal necessity, of parting with something that is a greater and more substantial Good; a Good more properly his, in exchange for them: Then, what do those Friends, who importune a Man to make them so too; what do they, I say, but desire, that he would part with a Happiness that is real and his own: (that is the Good of his Rational Soul, ) to procure them a Happiness which is but imaginary, and cannot be truly called their own, though they had it? For the Advantages they are so eager for, have no relation to the Rational Mind, in which the very Essence and Nature of a Man consists, ( and consequently all the Happiness he is capable of, considered as a Man, must needs depend upon that too, ) but they are the Objects of meaner Appetites.

This therefore is the most unequal Dealing, and the greatest Folly imaginable: They deal unequally, because they transgress the Laws of true Friendship: ( for the Pythagoreans, you know, make Friendship to consist

in Equality, ) And besides, Nothing can be more unfair, than for me to engage a Friend in some great hazard, and expose him to certain and extream Misery, and all this, only to satisfy some unreasonable Desire of my own: The Folly of it it double; for Who but Fools would be so barbarous, as to impose such an unreasonable Trial of his Kindness upon an Intimate Acquaintance, and particular Friend? And Who but such could be so blind, as not to discern the mighty difference between the Loss their Friend would sustain, by gratifying their Requests, and the Gain themselves should reap, in case he did so? He sacrifices his All: forfeits his Greatest, his own peculiar Happiness, to purchase that for them, which is not, cannot be their proper Happiness; and is so far from being a Great one, that it very often proves to be none at all in the Event, but a great and sore Evil.

But besides all this, there may still another very good Reason be given, why he should call such Men Foolish and Senseless; and that is, their esteeming Money to be of greater and more valuable Consideration to them, than the Modesty and Fidelity of a Friend. And to this purpose, he proceeds to shew, that a Person thus qualified, is so far from being unserviceable to his Friends, that he is really much more useful and beneficial, than even those who feed them with the Dross they so much admire.

For if among Servants, those who are honest and respectful, recommend themselves more to the Esteem of their Masters, than others who are of quicker Parts, and more dextrous in the Business of their Trade; sure the Reason holds much stronger, why a Faithful and Vertuous Friend should have the Preference infinitely before what the World calls a gainful one: And that Preference they will have in the Opinion of wise Men. For we feel the Benefit of these upon every

every Occasion ; they give us the Sweets of good Conversation, and the Assistance of seasonable Advice ; they are a perpetual Guard upon whatever we esteem most dear, and a sure Relief in Dangers and Distresses ; they are Physicians in our Diseases, and ( as if Life were too short a Space for so much Goodness to exercise it self in ) we find our Account in such Friends even after Death : And, upon all the Occasions, there is a perpetual good Correspondence, a mutual Agreement between the Giver and the Receiver of Favours ; no Discord in the whole Course of their Lives, but constant Consent, and perfect Harmony of Souls. Those therefore, that are Friends indeed, will contribute their utmost Endeavours towards the preserving the Vertue and Fidelity of their Friends ; nay, they will find themselves obliged to it, in Tenderneſs to their own Interest ; and cannot be guilty of so great an Absurdity, as to desire any Thing for their own Sakes, which must turn at last so infinitely to their own Prejudice, by robbing their Friend of his Honesty and rendering him incapable of doing them any farther Service.

Thus also that another Argument might be answered, and the observing what is in a Man's own Power, and properly belongs to him to do, would serve to refute what follows. For, Who ever told you, that it was a Duty incumbent upon you, or a Thing in your own Power and Choice, to procure Portico's and publick Buildings for the Benefit of your Country ? To this may be replied again, as it was in the Case of your Friends ; Who can be expected to bestow that upon others, which he never had himself ? And if to this it be rejoyned, Get them your self, that you may have it in your own Power to give to your Country ; what was said before will serve every jot as well upon this Occasion too. But these Considerations he hath left in the general for us to apply as we see requisite ; and hath supplied us with  
another

another clear and full Answer, much more pertinent, and particular to the Matter in hand.

What need this trouble you (says he) ? Is it your Concern to provide Cloisters and Exchanges for your Country ? The Smith does not think it his Business to supply his Country with Shoes, but with Arms; and the Shoe-maker does not think himself obliged to furnish out Arms, but Leather and Shoes. And sure every Commonwealth is served in best Order, and to most Advantage, when every one attends strictly to the proper Business of his Calling, and does not intermeddle with other Peoples Concerns; but takes care to do his own part, and interrupts no Body else in the Discharge of theirs.

Well, but what is my part then, says the Philosopher, and wherein will it be expected that I should contribute to the Publick Good ? The seeming force of this Question he obviates most excellently, by appealing to the Man's own Judgment in another; What! says he, if you have been the Means of making a good Man, have not you been beneficial to your Country ? Is not this a piece of Service, of much greater Consequence, than the Profits every mean Artificer brings to the Publick ? This would be the Advantage, and this the Thanks and Honour due to you, for making your self an honest Man and a good Subject: But if your Wisdom and Vertue have a kindly Influence upon others too; if your Instructions and your Example form them into the same good Principles, you are then a publick Blessing, and more beneficial still, in proportion to the Numbers you have an Influence upon.

And now you desire to know, what Rank or Office shall be assigned you, and would fain be like the General in the Army, or the Magistrate in the City or the Artificer in the Shop, who know their respective Trusts, and have some Station or Business, Military or  
Civil,

Civil, which they can properly call their own. To this the Author replies in general Terms, You may have any that will fall to your share, only with this Provision, that it be consistent with Vertue and Honesty. But if you make Shipwrack of these, while you pretend to venture for Monuments and stately Buildings, it is great odds, but you lose your Magnificence, at the same time that your Modesty and Fidelity is cast away. And, I pray, whether of the two is the greater Grace to a Commonwealth? a City well stored with true and good Men, or adorned with sumptuous Halls and splendid Palaces?

But, to come nearer to the Question, What Place or Esteem is due to a Philosopher, or what Regard should the State have to him? Surely Men should be esteemed according to the Dignity and Value of their Work. And, by this Rule, the Philosopher may claim Precedence, as a Former and Maker of Men; one that frames and moulds them into vertuous Persons, and useful honest Subjects. For the Matter he hath to work upon, is, himself and others; and the Pains he is at about them, is, to refine and purifie their Nature, and exalt them to a Life of Reason and Vertue. He is indeed, and ought to be respected, as a Common Father, and Master, a Corrector of Errors, and a Counsellor and Assistant in Goodness; One that is liberal of his Care, makes every other Man's Benefit and Improvement his Endeavour and Concern, and hath a Hand in all the Good that is done. One that adds to the Enjoyments of the Prosperous, by congratulating and rejoycing with them; and lightensthe Burden of the Wretched, by ministring seasonable Comforts; and himself bearing a part in their Afflictions. In one word, He will do all those Things, that are possible, or can be expected, to be done, by one who thinks no part of the World exempt from his Care, but feels in himself a constant Desire, and kind Intention, to promote the Good of all Mankind.

Now

Now, if this general Employment do not satisfie, but you would needs have this wondrous Man fastned down to some one particular Profession, in a wise and well-constituted Government, this Person would be chosen their Head, because his Eminence and Usefulness must needs give him the Preference before others. And indeed, his Qualifications, if we consider them particularly, seem to deserve no less. His Prudence, so much superior to the Common Sheep, capacitates him for a Shepherd to the Flock. His Learning and Wisdom entitle him to the Degree of a Senator or Privy Counsellor; and if he have applied himself at all to that sort of Discipline, none can be fitter to command an Army, because he must needs excell both in true Courage and regular Conduct. \* Thus *Socrates* gain'd immortal Renown by his Bravery at the Battel of *Delium*; and cast, as we are told so universal an Awe into his Enemies, that they all stood amazed at his Courage, and he made good his Retreat single, through a whole Body of them, without their daring to fall upon him. So likewise † *Xenophon* brought off that great Body of *Greeks*, and had his Prailes celebrated in the Olympick Games, for so Noble an Atchievment.

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\* This Action of *Socrates* is particularly taken Notice of by *Diogenes Laertius*. The Battle mentioned here was fought between the *Athenians* and *Beotians*, in which the latter won *Delium*, under the Command of *Pantarchas*; and the former being put to the Rout, *Socrates* is said to have retreated very leisurely and several Times to have stood still, and look'd back, to see if any of his Enemies would dare to pursue and attack him. He is also said, a little before this Fight, to have saved the Life of *Xenophon*, and to have brought him off, when Unhorsed at the Battel of *Amphipolis*. See *Diog. Laert. Edit. Meib. m. Amst. 1692. Segm. 22, 23. Pag. 93.* See also *Platon. Apolog. Socrat. Edit. Marsil. Ficin. Lugdun 1590. Pag. 363.*

† See *Xenophon* in *Expedir. Cyri.*



This, I say, would be the case, this the Respect paid to a Philosopher in a wise and well-constituted Government. But we must take notice, that wicked and licentious States do quite contrary: They are most inauspicious Places to dwell in, and have destructive Effects upon the Minds of Men; they stifle and quench that Light which Heaven hath given us, cast a Blemish upon the best Employments, discourage the most useful Sciences, disregard the Persons, and obstruct the good Influence of them, who teach us by their Doctrins, and lead us by their Examples. And, where so much wicked Industry is used to damp the Lustre of Virtue, that must be confessed a very improper Place, either for Men to lay the first Foundations of Wisdom and a good Life in, or to improve and confirm themselves in, after such good Beginnings. But then we must observe withal, that if in the midst of such perverse Conversation some one be found of a happier Complexion than the rest; one, whose Soul a particular good Genius hath made proof against all Corruption; the greater such a one's Difficulties are, and the more Tryals his Virtue is exercised with, the more perfect and illustrious it will appear, and shed abroad its Rays with greater Advantage, in the midst of so much Darkness. So true it is, that all the Traverses of Fortune, and this vast Variety of Accidents in Humane Life, contribute exceedingly to the Increase of Virtue; and that, both Prosperity and Adversity work together for the Good of those Men, who have the Wisdom to choose Things with Judgment, and to manage them with Dexterity.

## C H A P. XXXII.

*It is possible, you observe some other Person more caressed than your self; invited to Entertainments, when you are left out; saluted before you are taken any notice of; thought more proper to advise with, and his Counsel followed rather than yours. But are these Respects paid him, Good Things, or are they Evil? If they deserve to be esteemed Good, this ought to be matter of Joy to you, that that Person is happy in them: But if they be Evil, how unreasonable is it to be troubled, that they have not fallen to your own share? Besides, Consider, I pray, that it is not possible, you should have those Civilities paid to you in the same degree that others have; because the Profession you have taken upon you, will not suffer you to do the same Things to deserve them that others do. And how can it be expected, that a Man who thinks the trouble of waiting at a great Man's Levée below him, should have the same Interest with one that constantly pays his Morning Devotions there? Or one, that only minds his own Business, with another that is eternally cringing, and fawning, and wriggling himself into a Lord's Train; one that will not strain a Point to commend him; with a Parasite, that is ever blowing him up with his own Praise, that indulges all his Vices, and admires his Follies and his Nonsense? At this rate, you are a very unjust, and a most unreasonable*

unreasonable Man ; for you expect to receive that gratis, which is really set to Sale, and cannot be obtained without paying the Price : For instance now, and to use a very familiar one. You enquire in the Market, how Lettice go ? and are told, they are a Half-penny a-piece. Suppose now, another Person bids, and pays, and takes them ; and you will neither bid, nor pay, and go without them ; is there any Wrong done you ? or hath the Buyer a better Bargain than you ? He parted with his Money, and hath the Sallad ; you have no Sallad indeed, but you have kept your Money : Just so it is in the Case before us. You were not invited to a great Man's Table ; the Reason is, because you did not buy the Invitation : Pay the Price, and you may have it ; and that Price is, Commendation and Flattery. If therefore you think the Thing for your Advantage, it is set to Sale, and you know the Market Rates. But if you expect it should come without making Payments, you are very unreasonable. And if it be thought too dear, then sure you have no Reason to complain ; for, though you have not his Lordship's Dinner, yet you have something as good in the room of it ; for you have the Satisfaction of keeping the Price in your own Hand still ; that is, of not commending a Man against Truth and Conscience ; † [and of avoiding his formal

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† These Words are not in Simplicius's Copy ; but being generally found in the rest, I have inserted them in a different Character.

haughty Reception of you, which carries in it a thousand times more of Insolence than Civility.

### C O M M E N T.

**T**His Discourse seems to be a Continuation of the former; proceeding to obviate some Objections that are still behind, and such as seem all to arise from the same Habit and Disposition of Mind. For, when a Man hath turned all his Thoughts and Care upon his own Improvement, and hath disengaged himself from the World, and its Incumbrances; when he hath arrived to that Largeness and Sufficiency of Soul, as to despise Riches, and Honour, and Popularity; when he thinks it unbecoming his Character, to court the Countenance of Great Persons, by all the mean Arts and obsequious Attendance of Slaves and Sycophants; there will, in all likelihood, follow this Inconvenience upon it, that he shall be slighted and disregarded himself. Many of his Equals and Inferiours shall be invited home to Entertainments, shall be more particularly addrest to in publick Places, and receive all those outward Marks of Respect; nay, many, less capable of advising than he, shall be admitted into the Secrets of Families, and consulted in all their Affairs of Importance, while this Person, so much their Superior in Worth and Wisdom, is industriously neglected.

Now all the seeming Hardship that appears in such Usage, *Epictetus* might, if he had thought fit, have taken off in one Word, by remitting us to his usual Distinction. of the Things that are, and that are not, within the Compass of our own Choice: For, if those Things that conduce to our real Happiness be at our own Disposal, and the Things here mentioned are not so, then ought we not to suppose,

suppose, that our Happiness does at all consist in them. But this Solution of the Difficulty he takes no notice of here, partly because it is general, and applicable to many other Cases as well as this; and partly, as presuming it abundantly enlarged upon, and that his Reader was sufficiently perfect in it before. That therefore which he chooses to insist upon, is, something that comes up closer to the Matter in Hand; and proves, that the Inconveniences here alledged minister an Occasion of much greater Advantage, to those who have the Wisdom to make a right Use of them.

To this Purpose, he tells us, that the Instances, in which Men of inferior Qualifications have the Preference and Respect, before those who have made a strict Philosophical Life their Choice, must be either *Good* or *Evil*. If you please to make the Division perfect, I will take the Confidence to add, *or indifferent*; for in truth, there are a great many Things of this middle sort. But then it must be confessed too, that those which are indifferent, can neither be called Honorable nor Dishonorable. And for that Reason the Author seems not to have thought this Branch worth any room in his Division. Well, we will say then, according to him, that they are all in one of the Extremes, either *Good* or *Evil*: Now if they be *Good*, (says he) this ought by no means to be matter of Discontent to you. But quite contrary, it should add to your Joy and Satisfaction, that another Person is happy in them. For this calls for the Exercise of a very Exalted and Philosophical Virtue, that of wishing well to all Mankind, and rejoicing at the Prosperity of others.

And here we shall do well to observe, what a mighty Good he makes this seeming Evil to contain, and how prodigious an Honour this Disrespect derives upon us. For this indeed is the very Quality of the Mind, that brings us to the truest and nearest

resemblance of God, which is the greatest Happiness, that any of his Creatures can possibly attain to. For God is himself of absolute and unbounded Power, being indeed the only Source of whatever limited Power is communicated to any other Beings. And as his Power is infinitely great, so his Will is infinitely good. From hence it comes to pass, that he would have all things good, and not any thing evil, so far as that can be. And because his Will can intend nothing but what his Power is able to accomplish, therefore he does really make all things Good; and this he does not niggardly and grudgingly, but communicates to every Creature, of his own Goodness, in as large Proportions, as the Condition of each Creature is capable of enjoying.

Now the Soul of Man does not resemble God, in infinite and uncontrollable Power, 'tis true, for this is a Perfection of the Divine Nature, which our Constitution cannot receive; and besides, there are many Degrees of intermediate Beings, which though much inferior to God, are yet much superior to us in point of Power. But still in the other part of his Excellence, he hath condescended to make us like himself, and given us the honour of a Will Free and Unbounded, a Will capable of extending its good Wishes, and kind Inclinations to all the World, provided we have but the Grace to make this good use of it. It is therefore an instance of his wonderful Wisdom, and adorable Goodness, that he hath made this to be his Image and Similitude in our Souls; because this is the true and proper principle of all Operation and Action. And, though the Soul cannot punctually make all things Good, as God can and does; yet it goes as far as it can, in making them so, and for the rest, it does its part, by wishing that Good which it cannot give them [For that is perfect and true Volition.] when the Person willing, exerts his whole Strength and all the

the Faculties assist and concur with it; for we have the absolute Disposal of our own Minds, and so the wishing well to all Mankind, is what any Man may do, if he please. And indeed, a truly Good Man goes farther than all this; he wishes the Prosperity of all Men whatsoever; and he stops not there, but extends his Kindness to Creatures of different Species, to Brutes, and Plants, and even Inanimate things; in a word, to all that make up this great Body of the World, of which himself is a part. 'Tis true, he cannot make those Wishes effectual to all, because, as I said, the Willing is a Perfection given us by Nature, but the power of Effecting is not. For this requires the Co-operation of many other Causes, the Permission of the Gods, and the Concurrence of several Agents which we cannot command. And for this Reason it is, that all our Virtue consists in our Will, the Merit of all our Actions is measured by that; and all the Happiness and Misery of our Lives, made to depend upon the Good or Ill use of it. And thus you have the force of this Argument, proceeding upon a Supposition that these things are Good.

But if on the other hand, the Respects denied to the Philosopher, and paid to others, be Evil, this can be no ground of dissatisfaction, but ministers a fresh occasion of Joy: Not upon his account indeed who hath them, but upon your own, who have them not. And at this rate, the Good Man can never be Melancholy at the want of these things, nor look upon it as any disparagement to his Person, or diminution of his Happiness, but is sure to be pleased, let the Event be what it will; that is, either for others good Success, if it be Good, or for his own Escape, if it be otherwise. And thus all angry Releniments are taken off, in point of Interest and Advantage; for, though we allow these things to be what conduce to our Happiness, yet it is a much greater Happiness, to aspire after a Resemblance of the Divine Perfections,



which the missing of them, gives Men an opportunity to do; and if they rather tend to make us Miserable, than the Being without them, is not so properly a Want, as a Deliverance.

\* After this, he proceeds to Two other Topicks, the Possibility of obtaining them, and the Reasonableness of expecting them. From the former of these he argues, that it is not to be imagined, that one who never makes his Court, should have the same Privileges with one that is eternally labouring to ingratiate himself. And this must consist of all the Ceremonious Fopperies, and Servile Submissions imaginable; the waiting at the Great Man's Rising, expecting his coming out, cringing and bowing in the Streets, the Court, and all Places of publick Concourse; the Commending all he does, though never so Base, and admiring all he says, though never so Senseless. And therefore for a Philosopher, and a Man of Honour and Truth, who cannot submit to these unworthy Methods of insinuating himself, to meet with the same Countenance, and Marks of Kindness, with those that prostitute themselves at this rate for them; is, as the World goes, absolutely impossible.

Nay, it is not only unreasonable upon that account to expect them, but in point of Justice too; it argues a Man greedy and insatiable when he expects his Meal, and yet will not consent to pay his Ordinary. It is desiring to invade another's Right, and ingross to your self, what he hath already bought and paid for: For though he left no Money under his Plate, yet he gave that purchase which you would have thought much too dear. And consequently (as he shews by that instance of the Lettice,) you that went without the Dinner, have as good a Bargain at least, as he that was admitted to it: He had the Varieties indeed, but then you have your Liberty; you did not inflave your self so far, as to laugh at his Lordship's

Lordship's dull Jest, nor to commend what your better Sense could not like, nor to bear the affected Coldness of his Welcome, nor the tedious Attendance in an Anti-Chamber : In short, you were not the Subject of his haughty Negligence, and stiff Formality, nor the Jest of his Sawcy Servants. All this you must have been content with, to have Dined with his Greatness ; if you expect it upon easier Terms, you are mistaken, for it will come no cheaper ; and if you expect it, without paying as others do, it argues you greedy, and an unfair Chapman. And this Character is not consistent with that of a Good Man ; so that you must change your Temper, and be more moderate in your Expectances of this kind.

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### C H A P. XXXIII.

\* *We cannot be at a loss, what the Condition of things is by Nature, what her Laws and Methods, nor how Men ought to deport themselves, with Regard to them : For these are things so plain, that all the World, at one time or other, are universally agreed about them. For Instance, If a Neighbour's Child happen to break a Glass, we presently answer, that this is a very common Accident. Now the Application that ought to be made from*

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\* The Condition of Nature, and our own Duty, is plain to be learn'd from those Accidents, in which our selves have no Interest So *Casaubon*, upon the place, by a peculiar Notion of the Word *in quibusdam*, and in a Sense highly agreeable to the rest of the Chapter.

*hence*

hence is, that, when one of our own happens to be broken, we should no more think it extraordinary, nor suffer it to give us any greater Disturbance, than when it was another Man's Case. And this trivial Example, should prepare us for bearing Casualties of greater Consequence, with the like Temper. When any of our Acquaintants buries a Child, or a Wife, every Body is ready to mitigate the Loss, with the Reflection, that all Men are Mortal, and that this is what all Men have therefore Reason to expect. But when the Misfortune comes home to our selves, then we give a loose to our Passions, and indulge our Lamentations and bitter Complaints. Now these things ought quite otherwise to awaken the same Considerations; and it is but reasonable, that what we thought a good Argument to moderate the Resentments of other People, should be applied with the same Efficacy, to restrain the Excesses of our own.

#### C O M M E N T.

There are some Notions concerning the Nature of things. in which all Mankind consent; and not any one considering Person ever pretended to contest or contradict them. Such are these that follow: That whatever is Good, is Profitable, and whatever is truly Profitable is Good. That all things are carried by a natural Propension to the Desire of Good: That Equal Things are neither less nor more than one another: That Twice Two make Four. And these Notions are such as right Reason hath recommended, and riveted into our Minds, such as long Experience hath confirmed.

and

and such as carry an exact Agreement with the Truth and Nature of things.

But when we descend from these general Truths, to the particular Ideas and Doctrins of single Persons, there we very often find our selves mistaken. And these Erroneous Opinions are of different Sorts; some of them deceive us, by too credulous a dependance upon the Report of our Senses, as when we pronounce the Circumference of the Moon, to be as large as that of the Sun, because it appears so to the naked Eye. Some we are prepossessed in favour of, by inclining too much to our Sensual Inclinations; as when we say that all Pleasure is Good. Some are owing to the Admitting of Arguments, before they are well weighed, as those, which advanced the Belief of the World's being made by Two Principles, and that the Soul is Corporeal. Now these are what Men argue differently upon, and they are so far from being always true, that many times the Truth lies on the contrary side of the Question. And it can never be safe for us to depend upon such particular Assumptions, for the Knowledge of that true state of things, which *Epictetus* means here, by the Condition, the Laws and Methods of Nature.

Now nothing can be a more pregnant Proof, how exceeding fickle and unfaithful particular Opinions are, and how firm and unalterable those general and acknowledged ones, than the Variety of Mens Behaviour, in one and the same Case. For let any Accident happen to a Man's self, and he is quite another Person, transported with the Vehemence of his Concern, and all his Reason proves too feeble to support it. But when the very same Misfortune happens to another, there is none of this Disorder; he then looks upon it as it really is, considers it calmly and coolly, without Passion or Prejudice, and passes the same Judgment upon it, that the rest of the World do, who have no partial Affection, or Con-  
cern

cern of their own to pervert them; but only regard Truth, and the clear Reason of the thing.

This he illustrates by a very trivial Instance. that of breaking a Glass, which when done by a Neighbour's Child or Servant, we are apt presently to excuse, by putting him in Mind, how exceeding common this is; that it is what happens every Day; that, considering how little a thing throws a Child down, how often they let things drop out of their Hands, and withal, how exceeding brittle the Matter it self is, of which the Vessel is made, and that the least Blow in the World dashes it to pieces, it is rather to be wondered; that such things happen no oftener: Thus we say, when our Discourse is Sober and Dispassionate. But when one of our own is broken, then we rage and storm, as if some new thing had happened to us. And yet in all Reason, the same Consideration of the Accident being so usual, ought to offer it self to our Minds then too, and with the same Success.

Now this (says he) you may, if you please apply to Matters of greater Importance: When any of our Acquaintants buries his Wife or his Child, who is there that does not presently say, this is every Man's Case? And the Reason of it is, because they pass this Reflection from the common Principles in their own Minds, and the plain constant Course of Nature, which they find agreeable to them. For to die, is a Necessity unavoidable; 'tis the very Condition of Humane Nature; To be Man, and not subject to this Fate, would imply a Contradiction. And yet for all this, when such a Loss happens in a Man's own Family, what Groans, what Tears, what loud Exclamations, what wild Extravagances of Passion do immediately follow? Nay, how hard is it to persuade Men, that there is not a justifiable Cause for all this, or that any other Person living, ever suffer'd such an Affliction before? Now, why should not such

such a one recollect how he felt himself affected, when he saw his Neighbour in such Excesses, and how wisely he could tell him then, that he mistook his own Case? That Death was inevitable, and nothing more frequent, and that there was nothing in the Accident itself, that could create all this Disorder, but that was owing entirely to his own mistaken Apprehensions, and the violent Passions of his own Mind, which shewed it him in a false Light?

Now indeed there are Two Reasons, why we should be thus partial and passionate in our own Case: One is, the Exceeding Fondness, and tender Sympathy between the Rational Soul, and the Mortal Body; which considering that this Part must Die, is much more close and moving, than in Reason it ought to be. The other is, that though we know and are satisfied, that Die we must, yet we do not care to think of it; but these Two dear Friends live together, as if they were never to part. Now there is nothing that gives a Man so much Disturbance and Confusion, as the being surpris'd with any Accident; for, whatever we have foreseen, and made familiar to our Thoughts by long Expectation, never gives us those violent Disturbances.

And this I take to be sufficiently plain, from what we see in Men's Behaviour afterwards; for even those that are most intemperate in their Grievs, yet within a little while, when they come to be us'd to the being without what they lament the Loss of, return to themselves and their Reason again, and all is quiet and easie, as if no such Misfortune had ever happened. Then they can suggest to their own compos'd Thoughts, what at first they could not endure to hear, that this is no more than we see daily come to pass; that other People are liable to it, and have born it as well as they; that the Condition of our Nature is Mortal, and most absurd it is to suppose any Man can be exempt from the com-

mon Fate of his Nature ; that our Friends are only gone a little way before, in the beaten Road, which all our Fore-Fathers have led, and in which we our selves shall very shortly follow them.

Now if this Separation, when a little Time and Custom hath rendred it familiar, become so very supportable, after the thing hath happened, I would fain know what Reason can be alledged, why the making such a Separation familiar to us beforehand, by frequent Thoughts, and perpetual Expectations of it, should not enable us to bear it with great Evenness of Temper, whenever it shall happen. For surely the true Cause of all our immoderate Concern upon these Occasions, is, that we do not represent these things to our own Thoughts, nor accustom our selves to them so effectually as we might and ought to do. And the Reason of this again seems to be, that the Generality of People have their Minds fastened down to their Fortunes, and all their Imaginations formed, according to the Model of their present Condition. Hence it is, that the prosperous Man is always Gay, and Big, as depending upon the Continuance of his Happiness, and never dreaming of any possible Change in his Affairs. And thus People that lie under unhappy Circumstances too, are as commonly Dispirited and Diffident, and can entertain little Thought of a Deliverance, and better Days. But another Cause, which contributes to this Fault as much as the former, is the unreasonable Fondness of these things, which Men lament the Loss of so tenderly: They perfectly dote upon them, while they have them, and cannot therefore admit any Thought so uneasy, as that of parting with them; for no Man alive cares to dwell long upon Meditations that are troublesome and afflicting to him. This Fondness is the thing we should guard our selves against, at least cut off all the Excesses of it, by reflecting seriously what we are our selves, and what



what that is, which we so passionately admire. We should consider, that it is what we cannot call our own; and that, though we could, yet it is so imperfect a Bliss, as to cloy and weary us with long Enjoyment. Our Kindness therefore should be reduced, and brought within such Proportions as are consistent with Decency and Moderation: And in all our Conversation, it will be great Prudence to abstain from all Expressions and Discourse, and especially from all such Actions in our Behaviour, as tend to endear these things the more, and serve in Truth for no other End, than to cherish our own Folly, and make our Passions more Exorbitant and Ungovernable.

## C H A P. XXXIV.

*As no Man sets up a Mark, with a Design to shoot beside it, so neither hath the Maker of the World formed any such real Being, as Evil, in it.*

## C O M M E N T.

THE Disputes which are wont to arise concerning the Nature and the Original of Evil, by being unskillfully managed, have been the Occasions of grievous Impiety towards God, and subverted the very Foundation of Vertue and good Manners; and perplexed many unwary Persons with several dangerous Scruples, and inextricable Difficulties.

First, As to that Opinion which makes Evil a first Principle, and will have Two common Principles, a Good and a Bad one, from whence all things whatsoever derive their Being, it is attended with a Thousand prodigious Absurdities For, whence should

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this Power of being a Principle, which is One, and is imparted to both these Contraries in common, whence I say, should it come? Or how should one and the same Cause give it to them both? And how is it possible, that these Two should be *Contraries*, unless they be ranked under one common *Genus*? For we must distinguish between *Diversity* and *Contrariety*; that which is White, cannot be termed Contrary to that which is Hot or Cold; but Contraries are properly those things that are most distant from one another, yet still under the same common *Genus*. White then and Black, are Contraries, because both bear relation to the *Genus* of *Colour*; for they are both Colours alike. And Hot and Cold are Contraries, for they likewise meet under the *Genus* of *Tactile Qualities*; and this is Reason enough to shew, that Contraries cannot possibly be first Principles, because there must have been some common *Genus* antecedent to them, or they could not be Contraries; and farther, because One must needs have a Being, before Many; for each of those many Beings must subsist, by virtue of its Essence, communicated from that first Being, otherwise nothing could ever have been at all.

Again, Some single Original Being there must needs have been, which must have been a Foundation for particular Properties, and from which those Properties must have been distributed among the Many. For, from the Divine-Original Good, all good things whatsoever proceed; and in like manner all Truth, from the same Divine Fountain of Truth. So that, though there be several Principles of several Properties, yet still these all are comprehended in, and resolved into, one Principle at last; and that, not some subordinate and particular one, as these are in their own kind only, but a Principle from whence all the rest spring; one that transcends, connects, contains them all, and communicates to each

each of them its Causal and Productive Power, with such Limitations and Abatements, as their respective Natures require. So exceeding irrational and absurd it is, to think of advancing Two Principles of all things, or to suppose it possible that there should be more than one.

Pesides, They that will have this Universe to proceed from Two Principles, are driven by their own Tenets into a Thousand wild Inconsistencies; they tell us, one of these Principles is Good, and the other Evil; they call the Good one God, but yet at the same time, they do not allow him to be the Universal Cause: They cannot worship him as Almighty, for indeed they have clipped the Wings of his Omnipotence, and are so far from ascribing all Power to him, that they divide it into Halves; or to speak more properly, they give the greater share by much away from him; they call him the Source of Goodness, and Spring of Light, and yet deny, that all things receive Light and Goodness from him.

Now what horrid Blasphemies, what opprobrious Reflections does these Mens Doctrin cast upon the Majesty of God? They represent him as a Feeble and a Fearful Being, uneasy with continual Apprehensions that Evil will invade his Territories. And, to ease himself of these Fears, and buy off his Enemy, contrary to all Justice, and Honour, and Interest, casting some Souls away, (which are so many Parts and Parcels of himself, and never merited by any Offence of theirs to be thus delivered up,) that so, by parting with these, he may compound for the rest of the Good ones with him. Like some General in Distress, who, when the Enemy attacks him, sacrifices one part of his Army, to gain an Opportunity of bringing off the other. For the Sense of what they say amounts to thus much, though it be not express'd in the very same Words. Now he that delivered up these Souls, or commanded them to be

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delivered up in this barbarous manner, had sure forgot, or at least did not duly consider, what Miseries those wretched Spirits must endure, when in the Hands of that Evil Principle. For (according to them) they are Burnt, and Fryed, and Tormented all manner of ways, and this too, notwithstanding they were never guilty of any Fault, but are still parts of God himself. And at last they tell us, that if any such Souls happen to Apostatize, and Degenerate into Sin, they never recover themselves; nor are from thenceforth in any possibility of returning to Good, but continue inseparably united to Evil for Ever. (Only here it is fit we take notice what Souls these are, and how they thus degenerate; for they do not admit their Crimes to be Adultery or Murder, or any of the grossest and most flagitious Enormities of a dissolute and wicked Conversation, but only the denying of Two Principles, an evil and a good one.) In the mean while, this God, it seems, is left maimed and imperfect, by the Loss of so many of his Parts; he is stupid and senseless too, (in their Hypothesis I mean, for far be it from me to entertain so irreverent a Thought) for he understands nothing at all either of his own Interest, or the Nature of Evil: If he did, what Dread could he be under, or how should Evil enter into any part of that Province which Good possesses, since their Natures are so very distant and irreconcilable, that they cannot run into each other, but their Bounds are fix'd, and immovable Barriers set between them from all Eternity?

For this they say too: But who, in the Name of Wonder, set these Bounds and Barriers? Did Chance? Then it seems they make Chance a Common Principle too. Did any other Being that had Authority over both these, and prescribed to them as it self thought fit? Then it seems That had a Subsistence before They made the World. But how could  
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that be done before the Creation? For the Division they make is like this upon Earth, for they assign the Eastern, Western, and Northern Regions to Good, and reserve only the South for Evil.

Afterwards they go on, and fancy, that Evil hath five Apartments, like so many Dens or Caverns; and here they tell us of Woods, and all manner of Animals, such as frequent both Sea and Land; that these are at eternal Wars with one another; and though these are said to be immortal, as being originally Good, yet they pretend at the same time, that they are devoured by their Five-formed Monster.

Now then, since these distinct Regions have been set out, as you see, from the Beginning of the World at least; and each assigned and accommodated to its peculiar Inhabitant; I would fain be satisfied, which way Evil should make an Incurſion into Good's Dominions. Or, if we should suppose this possible, yet could it be done however, and still these Two remain contrary to one another? May we not as well say, that White may be Black, and yet retain its Whiteness still; and that Light can admit Darkness, and still be Light, as that perfect Evil can make Approaches to perfect Good, and still continue perfect Evil? And, if this Impossibility be evident and unavoidable, what Occasion is there to describe God as they do, committing an Act of so much unnecessary Fear, and Folly, and Injustice, as is the casting away Souls to Evil for his own Security, and ever since labouring to no purpose (for so they will needs have it too) to redeem these Souls from Misery? A Design never to be effected, because, as I observed before, some of them have lapsed, and so must abide under the Dominion of Evil to all Eternity: And all this they will not allow the Good to have had any Knowledge or Foresight of, though with the same Breath they pretend, that Evil knew perfectly well

what number of Souls would fall into his Hands, and laid his Stratagems accordingly.

Their Scheme certainly had been much better contrived, had they represented the Good Principle, as always employed and taken up with the Contemplation of itself, and not engaged it in perpetual War with an Enemy never to be vanquished or destroyed. For they make Evil to be no less Eternal and Immortal than Good. And this, indeed is a considerable Objection, and a just Reproach to their whole System, that Eternal Existence, and Incorruptible Duration, no Beginning, and no End, are allowed to Evil as well as Good. And when these glorious Attributes are given to that which we cannot but detest, what Difference is there left, or what can we say more in Honour of that, which we cannot but love and admire?

Let us now proceed, if you please, to take a short View of the Account they give concerning the Creation of the World. Pillars then there are, they tell us, not like those of the Poet,

*That this vast Globe of Earth and Heav'n sustain,*

(for they scorn that any Poetical Fictions, or the least fabulous Circumstance, should be allowed a place in their Philosophy;) but (as one of their greatest Masters hath informed us) of solid unhewn Stone, and twelve Windows, one of which is constantly opened every hour.

But their marvellous Wisdom is not more eminently seen in any one Instance, than the Account they pretend to give of Eclipses: For they tell us, That when in the Framing of the World the Evils that were in Conjunction together gave great Disturbance by their jostling and disorderly Motions, the Luminaries drew certain Veils before them, to shelter them from the ill Influences of that Disorder; and,

and, that Eclipses are nothing else, but the Sun and Moon hiding themselves still behind those Veils, upon some extraordinary and threatening Emergencies.

Then again, How odd and unaccountable is it, that, of so many Heavenly Bodies which give Light to the World, they should hold only the two great ones in Veneration, and contemn all the rest; assigning the Sun and Moon to the good Principle, but putting all the Stars into the Possession of the Evil, and deriving them from a bad Cause?

The Light of the Moon they do not agree to be borrowed from the Sun, but think it a Collection or Constellation of Souls; which she draws up, like so many Vapours from the Earth, between Change and Full; and then translates them by degrees into the Sun from the Full to the next New Moon.

In short, they have a world of Extravagant Fancies, which do not so much as deserve to be reckoned among Fables; and yet they are by no means content to have them look'd upon as fabulous, nor do they use them as Figures or Hieroglyphicks, so as to signify something else of more substantial Goodness, but will needs have them believed to be strictly and literally true. Thus the Image they give us of Evil, is a Monster compounded of five several Creatures, a Lion, a Fish, an Eagle, and some other two things, I do not well remember what; but all these, put together, are supposed to make a very ravenous and formidable Composition.

Such abominable Impiety against God are these Notions and Principles chargeable with; and yet (which is still more amazing) the Persons that advance them, profess to take Sanctuary in these Opinions, out of a more than common Respect, and a profounder Reverence to the Divine Perfections, than the rest of the World (as they think express. They could not bear the imputing any Evil to God, and, to avoid this Inconvenience, they have



found out a particular Principle and Cause of all Evil; a Principle equal in Honor and Power to the Good, or rather indeed Superior and more Potent than he. For in all the Attempts that have been made hitherto, to corrupt the World, and render it miserable, Evil seems plainly to have got the better. For they represent Evil upon all Occasions taking Advantage against Good, and contriving all manner of Ways not to let it go. This is constantly the bold and daring Aggressor, while Good, in the mean while, gives way to, and mingles it self with Evil, would fain compound the Matter, and for any thing that yet appears, hath discovered nothing in its whole Management but Fear, and Folly, and Injustice. Thus, while they abhor to call God the Cause of Evil, they make him nothing but Evil in the most exquisite Degree, and (according to that vulgar Proverb) leap out of the Frying-Pan into the Fire.

But, besides these vile Profanations of the Majesty of God, this System of Philosophy does, as much as in it lies, tear up the very Roots of all Virtue and moral Instruction, by destroying and utterly taking away all that Liberty of Choice, which God and Nature have given us. For, besides those Attributes of Eternity and Immortality, it does also ascribe to this Principle of Evil a compulsive Power over our Wills, and that so very absolute and strong, that it is not only out of our own Disposal, whether we will commit Wickedness or no, but such as even God himself is not able to controul or over-power. In the mean while it must be confessed, that this is a very idle and extravagant Imagination: For, if our Souls are violently thrust, and born down into Murder or Adultery, or any other that are reputed the most grievous Crimes, and commit these, merely by the Impulse of some stronger Power, without any Consent or voluntary Concurrence of their own, then are they clear of all Guilt. And this is a Matter  
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so evident and acknowledged, that all Laws, both Divine and Humane, acquit Persons in Cases of Violence, and such a Force as they could not resist, and where it is plain they acted against their Will. And indeed there is not, nor can be any Sin at all in such Actions, where Mens own Minds are supposed to have no Concern, but to proceed upon Necessity and Constraint, and such as could not be resisted by them.

Now if these wise Philosophers, while they were at a loss where to fix the true Cause of these things, considered as Evils, bethought themselves of this Remedy, and set up such a Principle of Evil, as you have heard, to resolve the Difficulty; they have done their own Business effectually, and by a very pleasant Blunder over-turned their whole Scheme at once. For, if it follows likewise (upon the Supposal of such a Constraint put upon the Wills of Men by that Principle) that nothing they do is any longer Evil, then observe, how pleasant a Conclusion they have brought their Matters to: For the Consequence lies plainly thus. If there be such a Thing as a Principle of Evil, then there is no such Thing as Evil in the World; and if there be no such Thing as Evil, then there cannot possibly be any such Thing as a Principle of Evil; and so upon the whole Matter, they have left themselves neither a Principle of Evil, nor any Evil at all.

Since therefore this is discovered to be but a rotten Foundation; if any, conscious of its Weakness, shall presume to affirm, that God is the Author of Evil as well as Good, the Falseness and Impiety of this Assertion will ask but little Time and Pains to evince it. For how indeed can we suppose it possible, that that Opinion should be true, which cast such unworthy Aspersions upon him, who is the Author and Giver of all Truth?

And first, which way can one conceive, that God, whose very Essence is perfect and immutable Goodness, should produce Evil out of himself? For, since Evil and Good are contrary to each other, as our Adversaries themselves grant, How can we imagine one Contrary to be the Production of another?

Besides, he that produces any thing out of himself, does it by being the Cause of its existing, by having the Cause within himself, and having some Likeness to it in his own Nature; and so, if you respect him as the Cause, the Producing, and the Produced, are in some degree the same. So that the Promoters of this Opinion seem not to have attended to the manifest Dishonour they put upon God, by making him not only the Cause and Author of Evil, but to be the first and Original Evil in his own Nature.

Since therefore there is no such Thing as a common Principle of Evil, and since God is not the Author and Cause of it, what Account shall we give of its coming into the World? For it is impossible any Thing should have a Beginning without a Cause. And the best Course we can take for this will be, first to explain what we mean by Evil, and then to enquire into its Original; for the Causes of Things will very hardly be found, till their Natures are first known.

Now as to that Evil, which They suppose, who profess to believe a common Principle of Evil, and many of those that dispute this Question understand, we may be bold to pronounce, that there is no such Thing in Nature. For they pretend, that this Evil hath a positive Subsistence of its own, as Good hath; that it hath a Power equal to Good, and contrary to it; that its Essence is incompatible with that of Good, and will no more endure any Mixture with it, than White will with Black, or Hot with Cold. But if there were any such real and substantial Evil, like the Substance of a Man, or a Horse, or any other Species, that really and actually subsists; it must  
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needs have some sort of Perfection in proportion to its Nature; and a particular Form, that makes it what it is, and distinguishes it from all other Beings. Now every Form, considered as such, is Good and not Evil, because it is endued with the Perfections peculiar to its Nature. And indeed they are so sensible of this, as to make that Evil of theirs desire Good, and embrace and court it, and receive Advantage by it, and love to partake of it, and use all possible Diligence not to part from it. And how very ridiculous an Attempt is it, to impose a Thing upon us that do's all this, for a Being simply and absolutely Evil?

But then, if we consider in the next place, that Evil, by the Commission whereof Men are denominated wicked, and are punished by God and Man for contracting the Guilt of it; this is purely accidental, and hath no real Essence of its own: For we find, that it both is, and ceases to be, without the Destruction of the Subject, which is the very distinguishing Character of an Accident; and likewise, it never subsists but by Inherence in some Subject: For, what Evil of this kind was there ever in the Abstract, without being the Evil, that is, the Crime of some Person that committed it? And so in like manner, Moral Good, which is the true Opposite of Evil, in this Sense is merely an Accident too.

Only herein they differ, that Good is that Quality of its Subject, by which it is rendred agreeable to Nature, and attains its proper Perfection. But Evil is the Depravation or Indisposition of its Subject, by which it swerves and departs from Nature, and loses or falls short of its natural Perfection, that is, of Good. For, if Evil were the right Disposition, and natural Perfection, of the Form to which it belongs, then would it by this Means change its Name and its Nature, and commence Good. So that from hence we may conclude against any primary Nature  
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and positive Subsistence of Evil ; for it is not in Nature as Good is, but is only an additional Thing superinduced upon Good, the Privation of, and Fall from it.

Just thus we may conceive Sickness, with regard to Health ; and the Vices of the Mind, with respect to Virtue. And as the Walking strong and upright is the designed and primary Action of an Animal, and the end which it proposes to it self when it moves ; but Stumbling or Halting is an Accident beside the purpose, and happens through some Defect, and missing the intended Aim, being a Motion, not of Nature's making, nor agreeable to her Operations ; directly so we may affirm of Evil, when compared to its opposite Good. And, though these be Contraries, as White and Black are, yet no Man can maintain that they do equally subsist, or are equipollent to one another, as White and Black are in a Physical Consideration. For these do both subsist alike, and neither of them can pretend to a greater Perfection in Nature than the other ; and consequently, one is not the mere Privation of the other. For, a Privation is properly a Defect or kind of false Step in Nature, whereby the original Form is not fully come up to, as Limping is in a Man's Gate. But now each of those Colours hath its Form entire, and as much of what Nature intended should belong to it, as its Contrary. Whereas, in the Case before us, one of the Extremes is agreeable to Nature, and the other contrary to it ; and that which is contrary to Nature, is an accidental Addition to that part which is agreeable to it ; for Good was first, and then Evil ; not Evil first, and afterwards Good. As no Man can say, that Missing the Mark was antecedent to the Hitting of it ; nor Sickness before Health ; but quite otherwise. For it was the Archer's primitive Design to hit the Mark, and he shot on purpose that he might do so ; thus also it was the original Intent

of Nature to give us sound Health, and good Constitutions; for, the Preservation and Continuance of the Creation, was the very End she proposed to her self in forming it. And, in general Terms, whatever any Action is directed to, that is the proper End of it. But now the missing of the Mark happens afterwards by Accident, when the Operation does not succeed as it ought, nor attain the End at first proposed, but hits upon something else, some Disappointment instead of it. Now then this Disappointment which comes in afterwards, and by the Bye, may very truly be said to be Additional, and Accidental to the Original Purpose of Hitting the Mark; but that Purpose can with no good Propriety of Speech be called so, with regard to that which happened afterwards, besides and against the Man's Purpose.

If then all Things naturally desire Good, and every Thing that acts of any kind, does it with a prospect of, or in order to, some Real, or some Seeming Good; it is manifest, that the obtaining some Good is the primary End of all Operations whatsoever. Sometimes, indeed, it happens, that Evil steps in between, when the Desire is fixed upon some Object that is not really and truly good, but such in outward Appearance only, and which hath an Alay and Mixture of Evil with it. Thus when a Man, in pursuit of Pleasure, or greedy of Wealth, turns a Robber, or a Pirate, his Desire, in this Case, is principally fixed upon the seeming Good, and that is the Spring upon which all these Actions move; but, as Matters stand, he is forced to take the Good and the Bad together. For no Man alive was ever yet so unnaturally profligate, as to be guilty of Lewdness for Lewdness sake; or to Rob any Man merely for the sake of Stealing; or indeed, disposed to any manner of Evil, purely for the Satisfaction of doing Evil. Because it is past a'll doubt, that Evil, considered

considered and apprehended as Evil, can never be the Object of any Man's Desire. For if it were the principal and original Cause of those Things that proceed from it, then would it be the End of all such Things: As an End it would be desirable to them, as good. For good and desirable, are Terms reciprocal and convertible, and consequently, at this rate, it would become good, and cease to be evil.

'Tis most certainly true then, that all Things whatsoever do desire and pursue their own Advantage; not all their true and real Advantage, indeed, but all their seeming Benefit, and such as they at that time take for the true and best. For no Man is willingly deceived, no Man chooses a Falshood before Truth, nor Shadows before Substances, who knows and is sensible of the Differences between them when he does it. But this Misfortune happens generally from a blind Admiration of some apparent Good, which so dazles our Eyes, that either we do not at all discover the Evil it is attended with, or if we do discern that, yet we see the Thing through false Opticks, such as magnifie the Good, and lessen the Evil to the Eye. Now it is a frequent and a reasonable Choice, when we are content to take a greater Good with the Incumbrance of a less Evil: As for Instance, When we suffer an Incision, or a Cupping, and account the Evil of these Pains much too little to counterballance the Good there is in that Health which they restore to us.

Once more yet; That all Things desire Good, is farther plain from hence; That, supposing Evil to have a real Being, and a Power of Acting, whatever it did would be for its own Advantage, that is, in other Words, for its own Good. And thus much they who ascribe a Being and Operation to it confess; for they pretend, that it pursues after Good, would fain detain it, and uses all possible Endeavours

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not to let it go. And if Evil be the Object of no Desire, then is it not any primary and designed Nature. But, since the Condition of it is, in all Particulars, according to the Description here given of it, it is most truly said, to be an Accidental and Additional Thing, superinduced to something that did subsist before, but to have no Subsistence of its own.

Well (says the Objector) I allow what you say. We will suppose, that Evil is only an Accident, a Defect, and Privation of Good, and an Additional Disappointment of the first and original Intent of Nature. And what of all this? How are we advanced in the Question before us? For let this be what, or after what manner you please, still it must have some Cause; otherwise, How, in the Name of Wonder, did it ever find the way into the World? How then will you get out of this Maze? You allow God to be the Cause of all Things; you must grant that Evil hath some Cause; and yet you tell me, that God is infinitely Good, and so cannot be that Cause.

This Objection hath been already considered, and spoken to, both at the Beginning of the Book, where we explained this Author's Distinction of the Things; that are or are not in our own Power; and also in the Comment upon the XIII. Chapter, upon Occasion of those words, *Trouble not your self with wishing, that Things may be just as you would have them, &c.* But however I will speak to it once more here too, and that briefly, as follows.

God, who is the Source and Original Cause of all Goodness, did not only produce the highest and most Excellent Things, such as are good in themselves; nor only those that are of a Rank something inferior to these, and of a middle Nature; but the Extremes too, such as are capable of falling and apt to be perverted from that which is agreeable to Nature, to that which we call Evil. Thus; As, after those  
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incorruptible Bodies, which are always regular in their Motions, and immutably good, others were created subject to Change and Decay; so likewise it was with Souls; the same Order was observed with these too; for after them which were unalterably fixed in Good, others were produced liable to be seduced from it. And this was done, both for the greater illustration of the Wise and Mighty Creator's Glory, that the Riches of his Goodness might be the more clearly seen, in producing good things of all sorts, as many as were capable of subsisting; and also, that the Universe might be full and perfect, when Beings of all kinds, and all Proportions, were contained in it. (For This is a Perfection, to want nothing of any kind.) And likewise to vindicate the Highest and the Middle sort, which never decline or deviate from their Goodness, from that Contempt which always falls upon the Lowest of any sort; and such these had been, if the Corruptible and Mortal things, had not been Created, and Supported the other's Dignity, by their own want of it.

And Corruptible they must be, for it could never be, that while the First, and the Middle sort of Bodies continued as they are, some Immutable, both as to their Nature and their Operations; others Immutable indeed, as to their Substance, but Mutable in their Motion; it could not be, I say, that the Lowest and Sublunary Bodies, should ever hold out, while the violent Revolutions of the Heavenly ones were perpetually changing their Substance, and putting them into unnatural Disorders.

For these Reasons certainly, and perhaps for a great many others more important than these, which are Secrets too dark and deep for us, These Sublunary Bodies were made, and this Region of Mortality, where the Perverted Good hath its Residence. For there was a Necessity, that the lowest sort of Good should have a Being too, and such is that which is  
liable

liable to Change and Depravation. Hence also, there is no such thing as Evil in the Regions above us; for the nature of Evil being nothing else but a Corruption of the Meanest and most Feeble Good, can only subsist, where that Mean and Mutable Good resides. For this Reason the Soul, which, considered by her self, is a Generous and Immutable Being, is tainted with no Evil, while alone in a State of Separation; but being so contrived by Nature, as to dwell in this lower World, and be intimately united to Mortal Bodies, (for so the good Providence of our great Father and Creator hath ordered it, making these Souls a Link to tie the Spiritual and Material World together, joyning the Extreame by the common Bands of Life,) it seems to bear a part in all those Distempers and Decays, which Evil subjects our Bodies to, by disturbing their natural Habit and Frame. Though indeed I cannot think this to be Evil, strictly speaking, but rather Good; since the Effect of it is so: For by this means, the simple Elements, of which these Bodies are compounded, come to be set free from a great Confinement, and severed from other parts of Matter of a different Constitution with which they were interwoven and entangled before; and so, getting loose from the perpetual Combat between contrary Qualities, are restored to their proper Places, and their primitive Mass again, in order to acquiring new Life and Vigour.

And if this proceeding be the occasion of perpetual Change, yet neither is that Evil; because every thing is resolved at last, into what it was at the beginning. For Water, though evaporated into Air, yet is by degrees congealed into Water again: and so, even particular Beings lose nothing by those Vicissitudes.

But that which ought to be a Consideration of greater Moment, is, that the Dissolution of Compound

pound Bodies, and the mutual change of Simple ones into each other, contributes to the Advantage of the Universe in general, by making the Corrupti. on of one thing to become the Rise and Birth of another: And by this perpetual Round it is, that Matter and Motion have been sustained all this while. Now it is obvious to any observing Man, that both Nature and Art, (as was urged heretofore,) do frequently neglect a single Part: when the detriment of that in particular may conduce to the good of the Whole. The former does it, as often as our Rheums, and Ulcerous Humours, are thrown off from the Vitals, and turned into Sores or Swellings in any of the extreme Parts And Art imitates this Method of Nature, as oft as a Limb is seared, or lopped off for the preservation of the Body: So that upon the whole Matter, these Shocks and Corruptions of Bodies, deserve rather to be esteemed Good than Evil; and the Cause of them, the Cause of Good and not Evil Events. For those Sublunary Bodies, that are Simples. suffer no Injury, because they are subject to no Decay or Destruction: And for the Evil that the Parts seem to undergo, this hath been shewn to have more Good than Evil in it, both in Simples and Compounds, even when considered in it self; but if taken with respect to the Benefit which other Creatures reap by it, then it is manifestly Good. So that the Distempers and Decays of Bodies, take them which way you will, are not Evil, but produce great Good.

But if any one shall be scrupulous upon this occasion, and quarrel with that Being called Good, which is confessed to be no better than a perverting of the course of Nature; let not this Nice Caviller take upon him however to call it Evil, in the gross Sense, and common Acceptation of the Word; by which we understand something utterly repugnant and irreconcilable to Good. But let him rather call it a

Necessity

Necessity or Hardship, as being not desirable for its own sake, but having some tendency, and contributing to that which is so: For were it simply and absolutely Evil, it could never be an Instrument of Good to us. Now that which I mean by Necessary, though it have not Charms enough of its own to recommend it, yet does it deserve to be accounted Good, for leading us to that which is Good; and that which can become a proper Object of our Choice, under any Circumstance, is so far forth Good. Thus we choose Incisions, and Burnings, and Amputations; nay, we are content to pay dear for them, and acknowledge our selves obliged, both by the Prescription, and the painful Operation; all which were most ridiculous to be done, if we thought these things Evil. And yet I own this is but a Qualified and Inferior Good, not strictly and properly so, but only in a Second and Subordinate Sense: Yet so, that the Creator of these things, is by no means the Cause of Evil, but of a necessary and meaner Good, but a Good still; for such we ought to esteem it, since it is derived from the same Universal Fountain of Goodness, though embased with some Allays and Abatements. And thus much, I hope, may be thought sufficient, in Vindication of the Nature and Cause of that Evil, which Bodies are concern'd in.

Nothing indeed can so truly be called Evil, as the Lapses and Vices of the Soul of Man; and of these too, much hath been said before; but however we will resume the Discourse upon this Occasion, and enquire afresh, both into the Nature and the Cause of them.

And here we shall do well to take notice; That the Souls of a more excellent Nature, which dwell in the Regions above us, are immutably fixed in Goodness, and wholly unacquainted with any Evil. There are also the Souls of Brutes, of a baser alloy than

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ours

ours, and standing in the Middle as it were, between the Vegetative Souls of Plants, and our Rational ones. These, so far forth as they are Corporeal, are liable to that Evil, to which Bodies are subject; but so far as concerns their Appetites and Inclinations, they bear some Resemblance to the Humane, and the Evil, they are in this Respect obnoxious to, is in proportion the same; so that one of these will be sufficiently explained, by giving an Account of the other.

Now the Humane Soul is in a middle Station, between the Souls above, and those below; it partakes of the Qualities of both; of those more Excellent ones, in the Sublimity of its Nature, and the Excellence of its Understanding: Of the Brutal and Inferiour ones, by its strict Affinity to the Body, and Animal Life. Of both these it is the common Band, by its Vital Union with the Body; And by its Habitual Freedom, it assimilates it self sometimes to the one sort and sometimes to the other of these Natures. So long as it dwells above, and entertains it self with Noble and Divine Speculations, it preserves its Innocence, and is fixed in Goodness; but when it begins to flag and droop, when it sinks down from that blissful Life, and grovels in the Filth of the World, which by Nature it is equally apt to do, then it falls into all manner of Evil. So that its own voluntary Depression of its self into this Region of Corruption and Mortality, is the true Beginning, and proper Cause of all its Misery and Mischief. For though the Soul be of an Amphibious Disposition, yet it is not forced either upwards or downwards, but acts purely by an internal Principle of its own, and is in perfect Liberty. Nor ought this to seem incredible, in an Agent which Nature hath made Free, since even those Brutes that are Amphibious, dwell sometimes in the Water and sometimes upon dry Ground, without

without being determined to either, any otherwise than by their own Inclination.

Now when the Soul debases her self to the World, and enters into a near Intimacy with the Corruptible Body, and esteems this to be the other Constituent of the Humane Nature, then it leads the Life of Brutes, and exerts it self in such Operations only, as They are capable of. Its Intellectual Part degenerates into Sense and Imagination, and its Affections into Anger and Concupiscence. By these the wretched Mortal attains to Knowledge, just of the same pitch with that of other Animals, such as puts him upon seeking fresh Supplies for a Body that is continually wasting, and upon continuing the World by Posterity, to fill the Place of one that must shortly leave it; and upon making the best Provision he can for his own Preservation and Defence in the mean while. For these Cares are what no Mortal would have, were he not endued with Sensual Faculties and Passions. For what Man that is any thing Nice and Considering, would endure to spend so many Days and Years upon the support of this Body, (when the Burden of the whole Matter comes to no more, than always filling, and always emptying) if Sensual Inclinations did not whet his Appetite? Or who could undergo the tedious Fatigue by which Succession is kept up, if vehement Desires did not perpetually kindle new Flames, and the Prospect of Posterity make us more easy to be warmed by them? These Arguments have been in some measure insisted on before, and I take them to be abundantly clear in this Point, that though our Passions and Appetites be the Cause of Moral Evil, yet they are extremely Beneficial to the Creatures, in which Nature hath implanted them, as being necessary to their Constitution, and giving a Relish to some of the most indispensable Actions of Life. Upon all which Accounts, even these cannot with any Justice



be called Evil ; nor God who infused them, the Cause of it.

But the Truth of the Matter is this: The Soul is by Nature superiour to this Body, and this Animal Life, and hath a commanding power over them put into her Hands. This Dignity and Power so long as she preserves, keeping her Subjects under, and at their due Distance ; while she uses the Body as her Instrument, and converts all its Functions to her own Use and Benefit ; so long all is well, and there is no danger of Evil. But when once she forgets that the Divine Image is stamp'd upon her ; when she lays by the Ensigns of Government, and gives away the Reins out of her own Hands ; when she sinks down into the Dregs of Flesh and Sense, ( by preferring the Impetuous Temptations of Pleasure, before the mild and gentle Persuasions of Reason ; ) and enters into a strict Union with the Brutish Part ; then Reason acts against its own Principles, divests it self of its Despotick Power, and basely submits to be governed by its Slave. And this Confusion in the Soul is the Root of all Evil ; an Evil not owing to the more Excellent and Rational Part, while it maintains its own Station ; nor to the Inferiour and Sensual, while that keeps within its due Bounds ; but to the inverting of these, the violent Usurpation of the one, and the tame Submission of the other ; that is, The Perverse Choice of Degenerating into Body and Matter, rather than forming ones self after the Similitude of the Excellent Spirits above us. But still, all this, as I said, is Choice. and not Constraint ; it is still Liberty, though Liberty abused.

And here I would bespeak the Reader's Attention a little, to weigh the Reasons I am about to give, why Choice and Volition must needs be the Soul's own Act and Deed, an Internal Motion of ours, and not the Effect of any Compulsion from without. I have already urged the Clearness of this Truth at large,

large, and that the Soul only is concern'd, and act-  
purely upon the Principles of her own Native Free-  
dom, in the Choice of the Worse, no less than of the  
Better Part. Thus much I apprehend to have been  
plainly proved, from the Example of Almighty  
God himself; the Determinations of all Wise Laws,  
and well Constituted Governments, and the Judg-  
ment of Sober and Knowing Men; Who all agree  
in this, That the Merits of Men are not to be mea-  
sured by the Fact it self, or the Events of things, but  
by the Will and Intention of the Person. And ac-  
cordingly their Rewards and Punishments, their Cen-  
sures and their Commendations, are all proportioned  
to the Intention; because this alone is entirely in  
a Man's own Power, and consequently, it is the only  
thing he can be accountable for. From hence it  
comes to pass, that whatever is done by Constraint,  
and Irresistible Force, though the Crime be never so  
grievous, is yet pardoned or acquitted, and the Guilt  
imputed, not to the Party that did it, but to the  
Person that forced him to the doing of it. For he  
that used that Force, did it Voluntarily, but he that  
was born down by it, had no Will of his own con-  
cerned in the Fact, but became the meer Instrument  
of effecting it against the Inclination of his own  
Mind.

Since then our own Choice is the Cause of Evil;  
and since that Choice is the Soul's Voluntary Act,  
owing to no manner of Compulsion, but is own in-  
ternal meer Motion, what can we charge Evil upon,  
so justly as upon the Soul? But yet, though the Soul  
be the Cause of Evil, it is not the Cause of it, con-  
sidered as Evil; for nothing ever is, or can be cho-  
sen under that Notion. But it disguises it self, and  
deludes us with an Appearance of Good; and when  
we choose that seeming Good, we take, at the same  
time the real Evil that lay concealed under it. And  
thus much in Effect was said before too.

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And now, having thus discovered the true Origine of Evil, it is fit we proclaim to all the World, That God is not chargeable with any Sin; because it is not He, but the Soul that does Evil, and that freely and willingly too: For, were the Soul under any Constraint to do amiss, then, I allow there would be a colourable Pretence to lay the Blame on God, who had suffered her to lye under so fatal a Necessity, and had not left her free to rescue and save herself: (Though in truth, upon this Presumption, nothing that the Soul was forced to do, could be strictly Evil.) But now, since the Soul is left to herself, and acts purely by her own free Choice, she must be content to bear all the Blame.

If it shall be farther objected, That all this does not yet acquit Almighty God, for that it is still his Act to allow Men this Liberty, and leave them to themselves; and that he ought not to permit them in the Choice of Evil; then we are to consider that one of these Two Things must have been the Consequence of such a Proceeding: Either First, That, after he had given Man a Rational Soul, capable of choosing sometimes Good, and sometimes Evil, he must have chained up his Will, and made it impossible for him to choose any thing but Good: Or else, that it ought never to have had this Indifference at all, but to have been so framed at first, that the Choice of Evil should have been naturally impossible. One of these Two Things the Objector must say, or he says nothing at all to the Purpose.

Now the former of these is manifestly absurd: for to what Purpose was the Will left Free and Undetermined either Way, if the Determining it self one way, was afterwards to be debarred it? This would have been utterly to take away the Power of Choosing; for Choice and Necessity are things Inconsistent; and where the Mind is so tied up, that it can choose but one thing, there (properly speaking) it can choose nothing.

As

As to the latter, It must be remembred in the First Place, that no Evil is ever chosen when the Mind apprehends it to be Evil: But the Objector seems to think it were very convenient, if this Freedom of the Will, which is so Absolute in the Determining of it self sometimes to real Good, and sometimes to that which deceives it with a false Appearance of being so, were quite taken away. Imagining it to be no Good to be sure, and perhaps some great Evil: But alas! he does not consider how many things there are in the World, that are accounted exceeding Good, which yet are not really in any degree comparable to this Freedom of the Will. For in truth, there is no Thing, no Privilege, in his lower World, so desirable. And there is no Body so stupid and lost, as to wish, that he were a Brute, or a Plant, rather than a Man. And therefore, since God displayed the Abundance of his Goodness and Power, in giving Perfections inferior to this, how inconsistent would it have been with that Bounty of his, not to have bestowed this most excellent Privilege upon Mankind?

Besides, (as hath been intimated formerly) take away this undetermined Propension of the Soul, by which it inclines it self to Good or Evil, and you undermine the very Foundations of all Virtue, and in Effect destroy the Nature of Man. For, if you suppose it impossible to be perverted to Vice, you have no longer any such thing as Justice or Temperance, or any other Virtue left in the observing Moral Duties. This State of Purity may be the Excellence of an Angel, or a God, but impeccable and indefectible Goodness can never be the Virtue of a Man. From whence it is plain, that there was a necessity of leaving the Soul in a capacity of being Corrupted, and of committing all that Evil consequent to such Depravation, because otherwise a Gap had been left in the Creation; there could have been

no Medium between the Blessed Spirits above, and Brutes below; no such thing as Humane Nature, or Humane Vertue, in the World.

So then we allow, that this Self-determining Power, by which Men are depraved, is a thing of God's own Creation and Appointment; and yet consider withal, how necessary this is to the Order and Beauty of the Universe, and how many good Effects it hath. In other Respects, we can by no means admit, that he should be traduced as the Cause and Author of Evil upon this Account. When a Surgeon lays on a drawing Plaister, to ripen a Swelling, or Cuts or Sears any Part of our Bodies, or lops off a Limb, no Man thinks he takes these Methods to make his Patient worse; but better; because Reason tells us, that Men, in such Circumstances, are never to be cured by less painful Applications. Thus the Divine Justice, in his deserved Vengeance, suffers the Passions of the Soul to rage and swell so high, because he knows the Condition of our Distemper; and that the smarting sometimes under the wild Suggestions of our own furious Appetites, is the only way to bring us to a better Sense of our Extravagance, and to recover us of our Phrensy.

'Tis thus, that we suffer little Children to burn their Fingers, that we may deter them from playing with Fire. And for the same Reasons, many wise Educators of Youth, do not think themselves oblig'd to be always thwarting the Inclinations of those under their Charge; but sometimes connive at their Follies, and give them a Loose: There being no Way so effectual for the Purging of these Passions, as to let them sometimes be indulged, that so the Persons may be cloyed; and nauseate, and grow Sick of them. And in these Cases it cannot be said, that either those Parents and Governors, or the Justice of God is the Cause of Evil. but rather of Good, because all this is done with a Vertuous Intent.

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For whatever tends to the Reformation of Manners, or Confirming the Habits of Virtue, may be as reasonably called Virtuous, as those things that are done, in order to the Recovery and Continuance of Health, may be called wholesome. For Actions do principally take their Denomination and Quality from the End to which they are directed. So that, although God were in some measure the Cause of this Necessity we are in, of deviating from Goodness, yet cannot Moral Evil be justly laid at his Door. But how far he is really the Cause of our Deflection from our Duty, I shall now think it becomes me to enquire.

God does not by any Power, or immediate Act of his own, cause that Aversion from Good, which the Soul is guilty of when it Sins: but he only gave her such a power, that she might turn her self to Evil; that so such a Species of free Agents, might fill a void Space in the Universe, and many good effects might follow, which, without such an aversion, could never have been brought about. God indeed is truly and properly the Cause of this Liberty of our Wills, but then this is a Happiness and a Privilege, infinitely to be preferred above whatever else the World thinks most valuable; and the Operation of it consists in receiving Impressions, and determining it self thereupon, not from any Constraint, but by its own mere Pleasure.

Now, that a Nature thus qualified is Good, I cannot suppose there needs any proof; we have the Confession of our Adversaries themselves to strengthen us in the Belief of it. For even they, who set up a Principle of Evil, declare they do it, because they cannot think God the Author of Evil; and these very Men do not only acknowledge the Soul to be of his forming, but they talk big, and pretend that it is a part of his very Essence; and yet, notwithstanding

withstanding all this, they own it capable of being vitiated, but so as to be vitiated by it self only. For this is the manifest consequence of their other Tenets, that it depends upon our own Choice, whether we will overcome Evil, or be overcome by it; that the Vanquished in this Combat are very justly punished, and the Victors largely and deservedly rewarded. Now the truth is, when they talk at this rate, they do not well consider, how directly these Notions contradict that irresistible necessity to Sin, which they elsewhere make the Soul to lie under. But however, whether the Soul be depraved by its own Foolish Choice, or whether by some fatal Violence upon it from without, still the being naturally capable of such depravation, is agreed on all Hands; for both sides confels it to be actually depraved, which it could never be, without a natural Capacity of being so. Therefore they tell us, the First Original Good is never tainted with Evil, because his Nature is above it, and inconsistent with any such Defect; as are also the other Goodnesses in the next degree of Perfection to him, such as in their Cant are called *the Mother of Life, the Creator, and the Ancestors*. So then these Men acknowledge the depreciable Condition of the Soul, they profess God to be the Maker of it, and to have set it in this Condition; and yet it is plain, they think the nature of the Soul depreciable, as it is Good, and not Evil; because at the same time that they ascribe this Freedom of the Will to God, they are yet superstitiously fearful of ascribing any Evil to him. And this I think may very well suffice for the Nature and Origin of Evil.

Let us now apply our selves to consider the Passage before us, and observe, how artificially *Epictetus* hath comprised in a very few Words, the substance of those Arguments, which we have here drawn out to so great a length. For in regard the Choice of Good,



Good, and the Refusing of Evil, are the Object and Ground of all Moral Instructions whatsoever, it was proper for him to shew, that the Nature of Evil was something very odd, and out of Course. In some Sense it has a Being, and in some Sense it is denied to have any; it has no Existence of its own, and yet it is a sort of supernumerary, and a very untoward addition to Nature. In the mean while, this shews, that We ought not to make it Our Choice, because Nature never made it Hers; and whenever it got into the World, it was never brought in by Design, but came in by Chance. No Man ever proposed it, as the End of any Action; no Artificer ever drew his Model for it: The Mason proposes the House he is Building, and the Carpenter the Door he is Plaining, for his End; but neither the one, nor the other, ever works, only that he may work ill.

*Epictetus* his Argument then lies in the following Syllogism. Evil is the missing of the Mark: For what Nature hath given a real and a designed Existence to, is the Mark; and the compassing of that, is the hitting of the Mark. Now if what Nature really made and designed, be not the missing of the Mark, (as it is not, but the hitting it indeed) and if Evil be the missing of the Mark, then it is plain, that Evil can be none of those things, which have a real and a designed Existence.

Now, that Evil is properly the missing of the Mark, is plain, from what hath been spoken to this point already. For suppose a Man makes Pleasure his Mark, he aims at it as a Good and Desirable thing; he lets fly accordingly, his Imaginations I mean, which indeed fly swifter than any Arrow out of a Bow. But if he do not attain the Good he desires, but shoot wide, or short of it, 'tis plain this Man is worsted, and hath missed his Mark. And again, that Something, to which Nature designed and gave a Being, is constantly the Mark every Man aims

aims at, and the obtaining those things, the hitting of his Mark, is no less evident from the Instances I gave of the Mason and the Carpenter.

Now, when the Author says, there is no such real Being as Evil in the World, you are to understand, that Nature never formed or designed any such thing: And then if you please, you may take his Minor Proposition singly by itself, which consists of those Words, *As no Man sets up a Mark with a Design to shoot beside it.* (For this intimates that Evil is a missing of one's Aim,) without mentioning the Major; which implies, that the principal Design, and real work of Nature, is never the missing, but the hitting of the Mark; and so add the Conclusion, which is this, Therefore Evil is none of the principal Designs, or real Works of Nature.

It may likewise be put all together into one single Hypothetical Proposition thus: *If no Man sets up a Mark on purpose to shoot beside it, then there is no such real Being as Evil in the World.* For if there were such a thing, then it would be proposed as the End or Product of Action. But Evil is never proposed as a thing to be produced or obtained, but as a thing to be declined; for Evil is always the Object of our Refusal and Aversion. So that at this rate, it would follow, that there is a Mark set up, only that it may not be hit; which is contrary to common Sense, and the Practice of all Mankind. And therefore there can be no such thing in Nature as Evil, because Evil is not capable of being the End of any Action in Nature.

## C H A P. XXXV.

If any one should take upon him to expose your Body to be abused by every Man you meet, you would resent it as an insupportable Insolence and Affront. And ought you not then to be much ashamed of your self, for enslaving and exposing your Mind to every one that is disposed to take the Advantage? For so indeed you do, when you put it in the power of every Malicious Tongue, to disturb the inward peace and order of your Breast. For this Reason, before you attempt any thing, weigh diligently with your self, the several Difficulties it is like to be incumbred with, the Circumstances preliminary to, and consequent upon it. For unless you come well settled with this Consideration, you will afterwards be discouraged; and what you begun with Eagerness and Vigor, you will desist from with Cowardice and Shame.

## C H A P. XXXVI.

You are extremely desirous to win the Olympick Crown. I wish the same for my self too; and look upon it as an Immortal Honour. But not so fast: Consider the Preparations necessary to such an Undertaking, and the Accidents that may follow upon it; and then let me hear you say you'll attempt it. You must be  
confined

confined to a strict Regimen, must be cramm'd with Meat when you have no Appetite, must abstain wholly from Boiled Meats, must exercise whether you be disposed to it or no, whether it be hot or cold, must drink nothing but what is warm, nor any Wine, but in such Proportions as shall be thought proper for you. In a Word, you must resign your self up to your Governor, with as absolute an Obedience, as you would to a Physician. When all this Hardship is mastered, you have all the Chances of Combat to go through still. And here it is many a Man's Fortune to break an Arm, or put out a Leg, to be thrown by his Adversary, and get nothing but a mouthful of Dust for his Pains; and, as it may happen, to be lashed and beaten, and become the Jest and Scorn of the Spectators. Lay all these Things together, and then, perhaps, your Courage may be cooled. But if upon considering them well, you nevertheless retain your Resolution, then are you fit to set about the Pursuit of what you so much desire. Otherwise you will come off like Little Children, who in their Sports act sometimes Wrestlers, and sometimes Fiddlers; now they are Fencers, and play Prizes; then they turn Trumpeters, and go to War; and by and by build a Stage, and act Plays. Just so we shall have you, one while an Olympick Fighter, and another a Gladiator, by and by an Orator, and after that a Philosopher; but nothing long, except a ridiculous Whiffler, a mere Ape, that mimick all you see, and venture

ture at all Professions, but stick to none. And all this is occasioned by your taking Things upon you Hand over Head, without being seasoned and duly prepared for them; but either with a rash Heat or fickle Inclination. Thus it is with many People, when they see an eminent Philosopher, or hear him quoted with Admiration and Respect (as, How excellently did Socrates write on such a Subject; sure no Man was ever like him,) nothing will serve their Turn, but these Hotspurs must needs be Philosophers too, and each of them does not doubt, but he shall make a Socrates in time.

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## C H A P. XXXVII.

Now I advise thee, Friend, first of all to consider perfectly the Nature of the Thing thou would'st undertake, and then thy own Qualifications for it, whether this be what thou art cut out for, or no. Examine thy Limbs, and thy Sinews; every Man is not built for the Olympick Exercises. Do you imagine, when you apply your self to Philosophy, that you can be allowed to live at the same rate you do now? To indulge your Appetite, and be as nice in all you Eat and Drink? Alas! you must prepare for want of Sleep, for hard Labour, for Absence from your Family and your Friends, for Contempt and Insolence from your Inferiours, and to have others, less worthy, put over your Head in Preferments, counteracted more than

than you in Courts of Justice, and respected more in Conversation. Sit down now, and ask your self, if the Prize be worth all this Pains? Whether you can be content, at so dear a Rate, to purchase an equal Temper, a quiet Mind, perfect Freedom, and unmovable Constancy. If you think the Price set up-  
 on these Things too high, leave them for some other Purchaser, and do not expose your self, like those ridiculous Boys I mention'd; by being a Philosopher this Hour, and an Excise-Man the next; a School-master to Day, and a Statesman to Morrow. These Things are not for your Credit. In short, you have but one Man to make, and you may make him either a Good or a Bad one. You must either make your Self, or the World, your Care. In a Word, you must be either a Fool, or a Philosopher.

### C O M M E N T.

THE Thing Epictetus drives at is very much illustrated by the Comparisons he uses here, and setting our selves in Opposition to Others, and the Soul to the Body. For, to be injured by ones own Self, is much worse than if it were done by another. If we are apt to resent an Unkindness, when coming from a Friend, with much more Impatience, than the same Thing from a Common Man; because, the Considerations of intimate Acquaintance, and former Obligations step in, and heighten the Provocation, by telling us we had Reason to expect better Usage; how much more is the Injustice aggravated, when a Man does any

Thing

Thing to his own Prejudice? And again, If the Affronts and Injuries done to the Body are so deeply resented, how much more tender ought we to be, when the Soul is injured and abused?

Again, If we think it an insupportable Insultence in any other Person to expose our Body to Abuses, when yet his Affronting or not Affronting us after this manner is a Thing not in our own Power; and, if the exposing our Minds to be abused by the next Man we meet, by suffering our Selves to be disordered at the Calumnies of every malicious Railer, be a Thing that depends purely upon our own Choice, whether it shall be done or not; then we ought to be ashamed upon a double Account: First, for taking a Thing ill, which was not in our Power to help, and which too, when done, was not strictly Evil to us; and then, for exposing our own Selves to that which is a real Evil, and that Evil so much the worse, because such a one, as it was in our Power to prevent.

Now upon this Occasion he changes his Expression, and does not call it Indignation, but Shame. For the Injuries that come upon us from another Hand, we receive with Relentments of Anger; but those that our Selves are guilty of, we reflect upon with Shame and Remorse. And surely there is much greater Reason for doing so, when we our Selves have been guilty of injuring our Selves; Especially, when these Injuries need not have befallen us, indeed could not have done so, but by our own Choice. And this is the proper Notion of Shame, the being out of Countenance at the Folly and Foulness of our own voluntary Miscarriages. And what can more deserve a Blush, than the not discerning the mighty Difference there is between the several Branches of so lively a Comparison as this? And when one does discern it, what can be more scandalous, than not to act accordingly?

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C H A P.



## C H A P. XXXVIII.

*It may be said, generally speaking, That the Quality of the Persons we converse with, and the mutual Relations they bear, is the true Standard of a Man's Duty and Behaviour toward them. Thus my Duty to a Father is to assist and take care of him; to support his Age and his Infirmities; to yield to him, and pay him Service and Respect upon all occasions, and to receive both his Reproofs and his Chastisements with patience and submission. But you'll say, He is a rigorous and unnatural Father. What's that to the purpose? You are to remember, this Obligation to Duty does not arise from the Consideration of his Goodness, but from the Relation he bears to us: No Failings of his can make him cease to be a Father, and consequently none can absolve you from the Obedience of a Son. Your Brother hath done you an Injury; but do not suppose that this dispenses with the Kindness you owe him: You are still to observe what becomes You; not to imitate what misbecame Him. Besides, no body can do you a real Injury, without your own Concurrence: You are not one whit the worse, unless you think yourself so. After this manner it will be easie to discover what is fit for you upon all occasions. For it is but considering your self under the several Qualities of a Neighbour, or a Subject, or a Civil Magistrate, or a Military Officer,*  
and

*and you will soon discern, what Behaviour is proper from, or to, a Person, in each of these Stations respectively.*

C O M M E N T.

THE Duty of a Man is properly that which it becomes him to do upon every occasion, and the rendering to every one what is fit to be expected from him. This is more peculiarly called the Work of Justice, taken in a sense so comprehensive, as to include all manner of Vertue. For the Word is sometimes restrained to one particular Vertue, distinguished from the rest; and sometimes enlarged and extended to them all. Now it is the business of Justice, to give every one his due: Upon which account, all Institutions, both Moral and Political, have this for their proper Object. There is private Justice, with regard to a Man's own Mind, and this assigns to every part of the Soul what belongs to it; and there is the Publick Justice of a Country, which distributes to every Member of the Commonwealth, according to his Dignity and Deserts. Having therefore instructed his young Philosopher, as you see before, which Precepts have indeed some reference to this kind of Duty too, he proceeds here to direct him how he may discover what it is, and discharge it upon all occasions: And what others have been very prolix and voluminous upon, (as particularly *Nicolaus Damascenus*) he hath here reduced into a very narrow compass, and laid before us with wonderful Energy and Clearness.

Now the Duty of a Man, if you will branch it out into its several Heads, concerns his Behaviour: First, towards Men, and, in general, to all his Equals: Then, to those Beings that are above him.

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Thirdly, to those below him : And, Lastly, to his own self. Each of these Heads have distinct Rules and Measures, the Principal whereof *Epictetus* treats of, beginning in this Chapter with Mens Duty to one another.

To this purpose he gives us a convenient Intimation, how we may find out what is properly our Duty, and that this differs, according to the several Posts, in which Men stand to one another. There is one kind of Deportment due to a Father, and another to a Son ; one to our own Country-man, and another to a Stranger ; one to a Friend, or a Benefactor, and another to an Enemy that hath injured us. And the reason of this is, Because the Relation I bear to a Father, as the Person to whom, next under God, I owe my Being, and the Comforts of it, differs from that which I bear to a Son, whom I am to consider, not as a Cause, but as an Effect, of my self ; and to look upon him as one to whom I have communicated part of my own Substance. So that in all these Cases, the first thing we have to do, is, to enquire into the Quality and Relation of the Person, and then to suit our Demeanour accordingly.

Now this Relation (generally speaking) is the Order of Things, or the mutual Regard they have to one another. And this may be either the Effect of Necessity and Nature, or of Choice ; it may have respect either to Similitude or Dissimilitude ; either to Proximity, or to Distance. For this Relation is a sort of Common Band of the Persons concerned in it, which links them so together, that, though they be distinct in other respects, yet they cannot be absolutely dis-joined, but must continue to have an Interest each in other. For which Reason it is, that Relatives are said to belong to one another.

Now the natural Order and Respect which proceeds upon Proximity, joins sometimes Equals, as Brothers ;

Brothers ; and here both the Denominations and the Duty of each Party is the same ; for both are Brothers : And so likewise it is in other like Cases Both are Equals, both are Cousins, both are Countrymen. There is also a natural Respect which implies Distance, and this regards People of different Birth and Countries ; and likewise proceeds upon the like Names, and the like Duties, as of one Stranger, or Foreigner, to another. And this is a Respect inferring Distance, because, as that which express'd nearness of Blood and Family brought them closer together, so this which denies such a nearness, does in that very *Idea* set them farther asunder. This however is a general Rule, That in all Cases, where both Parties are upon the Level, and go by the same Names, there they owe the same Duties too, and that, whether the Term by which the Relation is express'd, imply Proximity or Distance.

Again, there is also a mutual Respect founded in Nature, where a Disparity is implied ; as, between Father and Son : For here the Expectances are not the same, as between Brothers they were said to be, nor are the Denominations, as there, the same. This then is a natural Regard which joins People upon unequal Terms ; and this Inequality is the same in Proportion, as in a Cause and its Effect. There is another Relation too of Disparity between Things that seem Contraries, as between the Right Side and the Left ; for these have a mutual Respect to each other, and yet that depends upon a kind of local Contrariety. There is likewise a dis-junctive Relation in Nature, which is between Disparates too, as Things of last Year and this Year ; for this shews an Inequality in Time.

The Relation upon Choice, that implies Proximity, and lies between Equals, is that of Friends ; and that which implies Distance, or the Dis-junctive, is that of Enemies : For even Enemies are under a

voluntary Relation to one another ; and these Relations lying between Equals, have (as I observed before) the same Names, and are obliged to the same Duties. This voluntary Relation lies sometimes in Disparity too, as between Master and Scholar, considered as the Cause and the Effect ; between the Buyer and Seller, as contradistinguished from each other. The dis-junctive Relations of this kind that carry a Disparity, are the Flier and the Pursuer ; for these Men are under a voluntary and an unequal Relation to one another, though this be such an one as implies Distance and Dis-junction too.

The Relation between Husband and Wife, seems to be something betwixt that by Nature, and that by Choice, for in Truth it is partly one, and partly the other, and inferrs a Disparity both of Name and Duty. But that of Neighbours, which is a kind of intermediate Relation too, hath an equality in Duty, and the same Title. Between the Person in Authority, and Him under it, there is some kind of natural Relation (for Nature intended, in all her Productions, that the Better should govern the Worse.) It depends partly upon Choice too, as when by some Common Agreement the Wealthy bear Rule, and the Meaner People submit to it ; and it is a mixture of both these, when instead of Wealth and Power, the Wisest are advanced to the Chair by Consent.

And now that this rough, imperfect Draught hath been laid before us, of the several Relations Men bear to one another, it will concern us to consider, in which We, and the Persons we converse with, stand, and to take our Measures from thence ; but with this Caution, That we still answer our Character, whether they make good theirs, or no ; and especially, where Nature hath made the Relation, and prescribed the Duty. For, where it is only founded in  
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Choice, there the Good Man, who discharges his own Part, hath it in his Power to untie the Knot when he will, and let the Relation fall asunder: That is, he can withdraw his Affection and Acquaintance from an unworthy Friend; and he can melt down a spiteful Man with good Offices, and cease to be an Enemy. For the same free Choice that contracted the Relation, can as easily dissolve it too: But the Relations founded in Nature are Eternal, and no Act of our own Will can ever make them cease.

So that if a Friend use us ill, and become an Enemy, he hath broke the Bond that linked us together, and released us from all that was due to him upon the account of Friendship, because he hath ceased to be our Friend, and chosen to be our Enemy. But if a Father behave himself viciously, or unnaturally, the Case is much otherwise: Neither his Rigour nor his Vice can make him cease to be a Father, because these are only the Effects of his own Choice; but the Relation between us is not founded in Choice, but in Nature; and the Obligation lies to him as a Father, not as a good, or a kind Father; so that though he be not such, yet our Duty continues still the same. We are bound then to pay him all manner of Duty, awful Observance, and tender Concern; to consider him as the Means made use of by God to bring us into the World; to remember, that his provident Care and Tenderness sustained the Being he gave us; and that our Preservation, as well as our Production, is in a great measure owing to Him. And therefore Children should look upon themselves as Debtors to their Parents, and pay back all their Kindness with much Gratitude and large Interest: They should give most ready Obedience to all their Commands, except such as tend to the detriment of the Soul; and in these cases their Compliance is dispensed with, because they are under a

higher Engagement to the Father of Spirits, and must not displease Him at any rate. And yet upon these occasions too, they should endeavour to give as little Offence as is possible; and though their Refusal may and ought to be resolute, yet Modesty must temper their Zeal, and contrive that it may be respectful too.

In all other Matters, we are to serve them with our utmost Power, both in our Bodies and our Goods: For if the Persons and the Possessions of Slaves are at the absolute disposal of those, whom Fortune and Purchase have made their Masters, how much more ought Ours to be at the Command of them, whom Nature made the Cause of our very Being? For this reason we ought to submit to their Correction, with much more easiness and patience, than Servants do to their Masters; and if to their Blows, then certainly rather still to their Reproaches and hard Usage. The ancient *Romans* had a Law, grounded it seems upon the Dignity of this Relation, the absolute Right it gave, the infinite Trouble Parents are at for the sake of their Children, the unlimited Subjection due to them (presuming favourably withal of the natural Affection of Parents) which gave the Parents a Power, if they pleased, to sell their Children; and if they killed them, call'd them to no account for it. And the Times of greater Antiquity still, bore so great a Reverence to Parents, as almost to venture to call them Gods: But finding some check from the incommunicable Devotion due to the Divine Nature, they called their Parents Brothers, *οἰκῆς*; by that intimating what profound Respect belonged to their Parents themselves, when even their collateral Relations were complemented with the Name of something Divine in them.

Now indeed in the Discharge of our Duty to Parents, the first and principal Motive is the Equity  
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of the thing, and the acting as becomes Men that make Pretensions to Wisdom and Vertue, which this is most highly agreeable to: And after this, we should represent to our selves the Divine Justice and Vengeance, which is very likely to punish us in our own kind. And we have a great deal of reason to expect, that we shall hereafter find the same measure from our Children, which we give our Parents now.

So again, if a Brother deal unjustly by you, let it be your part to answer all the Particulars of the Relation between you, and make good that Covenant, which Nature hath ratified and made unalterable: For though the World be a wide place, yet you can have no other Parents, nor Brethren, nor Kinsman, but those you have. And therefore, since you must take them upon Content, and there is no remedy, behave your self, as though you had made them your own Choice. Consider too, that his Behaviour toward you, is not in your own power to determine; but yours toward him is. And therefore you should not so much regard his Actions, which you cannot help, nor are in any degree responsible for, as what is agreeable to your own Duty, and fit for you to do; for in this consists all the real Advantage and Prejudice that can happen to you. He can do you no harm, let him design never so much, provided you do but depend upon your own self for your Good and Evil: But if you ramble abroad, and expect to find it there, you are the worse then indeed, though not by your Brother's Malice, but your own Mistakes, that place Happiness and Misery in things without you. Add to all this, the Advantage of winning him over by good Usage; for if your Forbearance, and Meekness, and Affection, can render him not only your Brother, but your Friend too, these two Relations meeting in one, and joining Forces, will make the Union wonderful close and strong.

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Now the Duties that we owe to our Masters, and Teachers, whose Business it is to instruct us in Wisdom and Vertue, are much of the same nature with those due to Parents; though in some respects, I confess, the Obligation seems to be greater in the Case before us: For these Persons nourish and train up, not our Bodies, but, which is much more considerable, our Souls, that is, our very selves. They do it too upon a different Principle, not constrained to it by Nature and Necessity, like our Parents, and by such an instinct as Brutes obey no less than Men; but they do it out of a free Choice, and a Desire to promote Goodness and Vertue: And this makes a near Approach to, and is a lively Resemblance of, the Divine Bounty, which takes Compassion upon sunk and lapsed Souls, and is perpetually retrieving them from their Misery, and restoring them to the Bliss they have lost.

Now these Observances must needs be peculiarly due to our Instructors, because we ought to look upon their Instructions, as coming out of the Mouth of God himself; and consequently we should submit to them, without troubling our selves to find out peevish Cavils and frivolous Exceptions against them. For certainly, it is not easie to conceive, how he, whose End and Profession it is to inform us in true Wisdom and Goodness, should impose any thing upon us, but what tends to the furthering so excellent a Design. But now, if our Parents take the pains to teach us, and thus to the Engagement of being our Parents, that other be added of being our Teachers too, then we are to pay them all that Observance and Respect, which can be challenged upon both these accounts. We must then look upon them as the very Image of God, reverence them as the Formers of our Souls, as well as of our Bodies, and like God, the Causes to which not our Being only, but also our well-being ought to be ascribed.

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The next thing that offers it self is the Duty of Friends; and this I shall treat with what Clearness, but withal what Brevity so weighty and useful a Subject will bear. The first thing to be regarded here is, The Choice of Friends: The next is. How to use and keep those we have chosen; and upon these Things all the Benefits of Friendship depend.

The first thing we should look at in our Choice of Friends, is Likeness of Temper and Disposition: For there are several Humours, which though very good when single, yet will make but ill Musick when brought together. The Sour, and Phlegmatick, and Cold Temper, will suit but ill with the Brisk and Sanguine one; though each of these alone, and each well coupled, may be excellent Persons. The next Consideration is, How the Person whom we make choice of, hath behaved himself to his other Friends before. The third Rule, which is indeed of such moment, that it may be justly thought to include all, is to observe, Whether he be a Man governed by his Passions or his Reason. When this is done, we shall find it very proper to examine into his Inclinations, and see which way the Bent and Byass of his Soul lies; whether they draw him to Goodness and Virtue, and such Actions and Enjoyments as are commendable, and besitting a Man of Piety and Honour; or whether to vile and unmanly Pleasures, and such as none but shameless Fellows and Scoundrels abandon themselves to. We shall do well to observe farther, whether these Desires and Inclinations be tractable and gentle, such as are fit to be spoken with, and ready to hearken to Reason; or whether they be violent and unpersuadable, such as mind nothing but their own Gratification, and are deaf to all Arguments that would draw them off from it: For Men of such Passions are always hot and peremptory, and by no means fit to make Friends of. Those also, that are fond of the  
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World, and expect their Happinels any where but from their own Minds, are very improper to fix upon: For they dote upon Riches, or Mistresses, or Preferments; and in all those things that are of a communicable Nature, they carve themselves too largely, and are desirous to engross the Whole; so destroying that Equality, which Friendship either supposeth, or introduceth. This in Riches, and such Instances, is plain beyond a doubt; and the Vain-glorious discovers it as evidently too, in the Desires of Reputation and Applause.

Now it is the peculiar Excellence of those things that tend to the Soul's Good, that the Possessor hath them entirely to himself, even when he imparts them to others. They are not diminished, but augmented, by Communication: For they are excited and kindled in the Breasts of those on whom we bestow them; and the farther they spread, the more they are scattered, the more and larger they grow. So that the Light of Truth and Vertue takes fire by Conversation, as a Match does by the mutual Attrition of Flint and Steel, which kindles by the Sparks that drop from it, but loses none of the Vertue it gives away.

Again, When Friends make true Good their End, and right Reason their Rule, they are sure never to differ in point of Interest; for they judge of Advantage by the same common Standard. Now when they are thus agreed in one Measure, and judge of Pleasure and Profit, and the contraries to these alike, they have secured themselves against the most dangerous and usual Bane of Friendship. For without a perfect Agreement in these Matters, Disputes and Quarrels are always unavoidable. And so much for the Choice of our Friends.

As for our Behaviour to the Friends thus chosen, That, in one Word, must make Reason and Equity its constant Rule: And upon this Account we must  
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never do any thing to our Friends, which we would not be perfectly satisfied with, when done by them to us. Whatever Kindnesses they receive from us must be extenuated, and thought moderately of; but whatever Obligations we receive from them must be very highly esteemed, and rated above their just Value. The Course directly contrary to this must be observed in Failings and Miscarriages: Theirs must be lessened and excused, our own aggravated and severely condemned. We must think nothing so strictly our own, as that a Friend should not have an equal, or rather indeed a greater Share and Right in it. And upon all Occasions we should give them Precedence, and Respect; and we should do it willingly and chearfully, as considering, that their Honours devolve upon us, and that a Friend, according to the Proverb, is a Man's second Self.

But since, after all our nicest Circumspection and Care, it is impossible for us to continue Men, and not give some Occasion of Offence; this Point is to be managed very tenderly. A Man that will be a Friend in good earnest, ought especially to guard this Breach, and to reprove what is done amiss with great Temper and Softness, in Obedience to that old and truly Golden Rule,

*Lose not a Friend on every slight Pretence;  
Ready to pardon, slow to take Offence.*

Pythag. *ἔνθα ἔστιν.*

That so you may admit him to a perfect and firm Reconciliation; and deliver him from the Remorse of his own Mind, by leaving no ground of Jealousie, that he hath not still the same Place in your Affection and Esteem.

It is certain too, that our Kindness and Concern ought not to be confined to our Friend alone, but extend

extend to his Relations and Acquaintants, and those, whose Affairs and Successes he thinks himself interested in: So that we should be as ready to serve them upon his Account, as he would be upon their own. Our Concern and Affection ought not to be restrained to Place neither; but we should have the same, and upon some Accounts, a more tender Regard to our Friend in his Absence, than we think our selves obliged to express, when he is present with us; an eminent Instance whereof I could give from my personal Experience in a Friend of my own. And, to conclude all, when once we have made a prudent Choice, and laid the Foundations of Friendship in an agreeable Humour, and tryed Constancy, and vertuous Dispositions, the Affections, that will naturally follow upon such powerful Attractives, will not fail to conduct us in the right Method of Conversation, and all the Duties and good Offices that can be expected, as the Testimonies and Endearments of Friendship, will follow of Course.

Now what a Blessing Friendship is, how rich a Treasure, and how fruitful in the Advantages of Life, is a Subject worthy of a long and studied Discourse; but at present I shall content my self with a few Particulars only, and such as occur to my present Thoughts.

First then; Every Friend hath Two Souls, and Two Bodies; and it is plain from the foregoing Rules, that he must needs have Two Estates: And if a Man have several such Friends, then his Advantages grow upon him still more, and he is multiplied into more Souls, and Bodies, and Estates, in proportion to the number of his Friends. In the Study of Wisdom and Nature, Souls thus united have an infinite Advantage, and the Light of Truth displays it self much more early and fully to them. Nor have they less in the Exercise of Vertue, by mutual Conferences, and joint Endeavours: These  
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bring their Improvements into one common Bank, from whence every Man supplies his own Occasions, and easily grows rich at the publick Stock. Besides, that such united Perfection will find a more than ordinary Blessing and Encouragement from Heaven, they are secure of prudent and seasonable Advice in all their Difficulties, their Motions will be regular and well weighed, and their Successes more probable, as having more Heads to contrive, and more Hands to act, than they can, who stand alone, and must encounter Fortune single. When such a Man is abroad from his Family and Acquaintants, yet that Absence, and all Want of him is made good to them by his Friend ; in Him he is present while living, and living when dead.

These are some of the Advantages. And the Pleasures of Friendship are not less than the Profits of it : For what Delight can be compared to that sensible Joy, that runs through all our Spirits at the sight of a Friend ? What Charms do we find in his Person ? What Musick in his Discourse ? What an engaging Gracefulness in all his Actions ? The Confidence we repose in him is above what any Ties of Blood and Nature can give our nearest Relations a Title to, and our Minds are more at ease, and more secure in his Fidelity, than any Degree of Wealth or Power can make them. Of which *Alexander* the Great gave a very pregnant Instance, who, we are told, when he was asked where his vast Treasures lay, pointed to his Friends, and said, Those were they.

A Friend is likewise the best Instructor, and the best Corrector that can be : For Reproof is least offensive, when coming from such a Hand ; nor is there any Person, whose Observation keeps us in equal Awe, or whose Censure we fear so much, if it hath been our Misfortune to fail in point of Duty ; Our prosperous Fortunes, and all the Gayeties of



of Heart we feel upon them, grow double by Communication, but are flat and insipid without a Friend to partake of the Pleasure: And all our Afflictions are disarmed, and their Force broken, when a Friend takes off part of the Burden, by his tender Sympathies, and seasonable Comforts.

Friendship indeed is the best School to train a Man up in all manner of Vertue and Prudence, and to learn the World in: This forms him for Conversation, and fits his Soul for all possible Accidents and Encounters: It teaches him Civility, and Meekness, and Truth. For one makes no difficulty of giving Precedence to a Friend; nor takes Offence at every Slip or Imperfection of his; and accustoms ones self to open his Mind freely, and speak his Thoughts without any Trick or Reserve. Here we find a strange Inclination to be grateful, and just, in returning Favours; and the Pleasure of doing them is upon no occasion so great, nor so generously put in Practice, as in the Case of a Friend. No Man will run so many Risques, nor expose his Person so freely to prevent another's Danger as he: For a true Friend scorns to decline any Difficulty, and is ready to rescue his Friend, though at the expence of his own Life. Could an Army be levied of such Men, they would rout double their Number by their united Force, and firm Resolutions not to desert one another. These are the Qualifications, that fit a Man for the World, and the exercise of them among Friends is easie, and pleasant: Whatever seems harsh at first is softened by Affection, and by degrees a Man will find himself a Master, capable of acquitting himself as he ought in all Points, as Occasions are offered. First to his Friends; and, when Practice with them hath perfected him, then to all Mankind.

This farther Consideration is likewise worth our Notice, That Friendship tie all our other Relations  
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the closer, and binds them faster upon us : It endears us to those whom God and Nature have commanded us to love ; it sweetens and recommends their Company, and enclines us to do all that is expected from us, with chearfulness and satisfaction. For unless Brothers, and Children, and Husbands, and Wives, be Friends too, and have a particular kindness and regard for one another ; though they may, with much ado, follow *Epictetus* his Direction, and discharge the several Offices which belong to their particular Station, yet all their Performances will come hard and strained. There will be nothing of Pleasure or Alacrity to what their Duty, and give it a relish ; but all is look'd upon as a Burden and a Slavery, the effect of Necessity, not Choice ; done, not because they would, but because they must do it, and not so much to oblige the Receiver, as to avoid Guilt and Reproach.

Now the true Reason, why this Relation of a Friend is more sacred and engaging than any other, seems to be, that it is not our Fate, but our Choice. Our natural Relations we were born to ; but, where our selves tie the Knot, it is generally stronger than where Nature does it ; and that, because, of all the Endowments of the Soul, that of Reason and Liberty seems to be the highest, and that by which we make the nearest approach to the Perfections of that Great ONE, in and by whom all things are united.

These are some of the Excellent and Marvellous Effects of Friendship, and such Humane Considerations as abundantly recommend it : But the most valuable, and truly Divine Recommendation is still behind ; which is, That the Union of Souls by an Innocent and Sincere Friendship is the noblest Contemplation, and the liveliest Image of our Union with God himself. And indeed we cannot here upon Earth aspire to any better, and more intimate

imate Conjunction with Him, and those Blessed Spirits, who are ever in perfect Harmony and Concord. It was not therefore without excellent Reason, that *Pythagoras* and his Followers, gave the Preference to Friendship above all other Vertues, and called it, The very Chain and Complement of them all. For in Truth, if any One Vertue be wanting, Friendship will not dwell there. For how can we suppose an Unjust, or an Intemperate, and Debauch'd Man, or a Coward, capable of Friendship? And an obstinate perverse Fool is so less than any of them: No, no, this Treasure is too rich, too refined for such sordid Wretches. A Man, therefore that pretends to Friendship, must aspire to as high degrees of Perfection, as the Frailties of Humane Nature will admit; he must work off the Dross of sensual and brutish Passions, purifie and sublimate his Mind, and then he is qualified to seek a Mate in Friendship; and when he hath found such another as himself, he must hold him close to his Heart, as his Dearer and Better Half.

If I have been tedious upon this Subject, the Reader will be kind, in imputing it to so good a Cause, as my Zeal for Friendship; which it were a most desirable thing to see some few at least pay that regard to, which it deserves. And indeed a few Instances would be some Comfort in this miserable Age; when the Vices and Vileness of Mankind seem to have banish'd it almost quite out of the World. But it is now high time to come off from this long Digression, and return to that which this Chapter directs us to; which is, to examine something more briefly, those other Relations, which *Epictetus* here hath thought fit to make express mention of.

For, after having told us, That the Consideration of the several Qualities and Relations is the best Rule of their respective Duties, he proceeds to instance

stance in that of a good Citizen, or Patriot: For this too gives us a sort of Affinity to all our Fellow-Citizens, or Subjects. The Country represents our Parents, and all, that are born in it, that are comprehended within its Privileges, and live under its Laws, are in some Sense Brethren; and a manifest Relation (though more distant I confess, than any hitherto insisted upon) there is between all the Natives of it. The likeness of Dispositions shews such a Relation to be of Nature's making; and this is very often observable in People, not only of the same City or Corporation, but extends it self to those of the same Nation too. Our Behaviour therefore to all such ought to resemble that to our Kindred, and all imaginable Care should be taken for their Improvement; for in this we shall consult our own Benefit too, and feel the Advantage of living among Honest and Vertuous People; of being supplied in all our Necessities, and assisted in all our Distresses; and of providing Husbands, and Fathers, for all our Orphans and Widows: For every Man is capable of lending a helping Hand, though not every Man in the same way: One may be a Friend with his Money: Another by his Authority; a Third by his Interest and Acquaintance, or by his good Advice; a Fourth by his Labour and Pains; and Those, who have nothing else in their Power, may be serviceable by their Pity and Compassion.

Now if a Man be both a Fellow-Citizen and a Neighbour, this renders the Relation something nearer still. For, as the State we are born in, and the Family we are descended from, are not the Gifts of a blind undistinguishing Chance; so are we to look upon that particular Habitation, and part of the same City where we dwell, to be assigned us by a wise Providence. So that those Fellow-Citizens, which dwell nearest to us, are upon that

account allied more closely still. And whatever have been specified as Duties to the One, are so, and indeed more so, to the Other, as We have Opportunities of paying, and They of receiving them. Therefore we are to rejoice in their Successes, and be heartily concerned for their Misfortunes; and when any of them are sick or indisposed, we must endeavour to be serviceable to them, as if they were a part of our own Family. In all our Conversation abroad, we should make it appear to the World, that while our Neighbour hath no Designs but what are honest and fair, we will stand by him to our utmost, and should think it a shameful reflection, that he should upon any occasion ask or receive a kindness from them that dwell at a greater distance, which it was in the power of us his next Neighbours to have done for him.

There is also a sort of Relation betwixt Us, and Foreigners, that come to spend some time in our Country; a Relation, of which God is the Author, who hath declared, that he bears a particular regard to Strangers. The good Offices therefore, that become due upon this account, ought very punctually to be discharged; Both in respect to the Almighty, who hath taken such Persons into his peculiar Protection; and also, to exercise and enlarge our good Nature, which ought not to be confined within the narrow bounds of our own Acquaintance or Country, but must stretch its concern over the whole World, and look upon it self as a Debtor to all Mankind. There is also another very weighty Reason still behind, which is, that this will give us Confidence, when we present our Addresses before the God of Strangers; and we may with a better Grace ask and expect that assistance from Him, which we have given them without grudging. For such is his condescension, that he allows us to look upon all our Endeavours and Actions

Actions of Kindness, as so many Loans to Himself ; and he will be sure to repay them with large Usury, and more to the Creditor's Advantage, than any the most Generous of the Sons of Men.

Above all things we must take special care never to injure or oppress a Stranger ; but quite contrary to give him our Countenance, and Help, and rescue him, if it be possible, from the Injustice of any other that shall attempt it : For God hath charged his Providence with a peculiar care of such ; because they are more exposed and destitute of Humane Helps ; and he, who hath promised to protect them more eminently, will be sure to revenge their wrongs more severely. It is fit too, that those who can do it, be assisting to them in the dispatch of the Affairs they come about, and furnish them with what conveniences they stand in need of ; that they be particularly tender of them in cases of Sicknes ; and, when the ends of their Journey are satisfied, contribute all possible endeavours towards the facilitating their return home again.

He tells us moreover, That a Private Soldier ought to consider his own, and his Commander's Post, and from thence inform himself what is due to his Superiour Officers. Now in such a case, it is not enough, that their Orders be obeyed, but it is necessary, that they should be executed speedily ; because, in time of Action, many favourable Opportunities present themselves, which if not presently snatch'd, are lost for ever. And they must be executed with Bravery and Resolution too, because the Fortune of the Field may depend upon such Obedience. A Private Soldier is likewise obliged to expose his own Person for the Safety of his Commander, because such an one's Life is of infinite Consequence. If a single Soldier fall, there is no great Advantage gained, nor does this change the face of Affairs ; but if a General fall, though the

Soldiers under him were victorious before, yet their Spirits sink immediately, their Order is broke, and every one makes the best of his way to save himself, as Sheep without a Shepherd run before Wolves. So that indeed, not only the Success of the Day, but the Fate of whole Countries and Kingdoms is often brought into extream hazard, by the loss of one eminent Commander; of which *Xenophon* hath left us an Example, in the account he gives of what happened upon the Death of *Cyrus*.

It is no less evident, That there is also a Relation between Civil Magistrates, and the Persons under their Jurisdiction, and several Duties that follow from that Relation. And here, if Men do not bear the empty Name of Governours, but are really what they are called, all ready Obedience is due to them; all Honour and Respect, as to Persons next under God, the Authors of our Peace and Happiness, and greatest Benefactors to the Publick. For good Governours make this the Study and Business of their Lives; they set about it zealously and heartily, and omit no care, that may any way conduce to the Benefit of the State. What *Hippocrates* said of Physicians, is much more eminently true of Princes, they do not torment themselves to no purpose with other People's Calamities (and *Epictetus* advises they should not,) but they sacrifice themselves and all their Quiet to Care and Trouble; they neglect their own private Affairs and Families, and must be content with perpetual Vexations and Interruptions, and to lose many precious Opportunities, that might be improved to very wise and vertuous Purposes.

Upon all these accounts, and to make them some amends, every Man is bound not only to be obedient, but, so far as in him lies, to ease them, and bear a part of their Burden; to be active and vigorous in their Support and Defence, as looking upon  
Their



Their Dangers to affect the State in common, and threaten the whole Constitution.

And, if these Governours be such, as do by no means answer their Character, nor take the care that becomes them; though we are not bound to vindicate their Errours, or their Wickedness. yet, even in such case, we are obliged to pay them all that is due to the Dignity of their Post; we must shew them all fit Deference and Respect, and comply with their Commands, as far as with a good Conscience we may.

But it is very fit I should now apply my self to the following Chapters, and not quit my first Design; which was to explain *Epictetus*, and not to run out into unnecessary Enlargements upon the several Relations Men stand in to each other; for otherwise, while I teach my Reader His Duty, he will be apt to suspect that I have forgot my Own.

### C H A P. XXXIX

*Take notice, That the principal and most important Duty in Religion, is to possess your Mind with just and becoming Notions of the Gods; to believe that there are such supreme Beings, and that they govern and dispose all the Affairs of the World with a just and good Providence. And, in agreement to such a Persuasion, to dispose your self for a ready and reverential Obedience, and a perfect Acquiescence in all their Dispensations; and this Submission is to be the Effect of Choice, and not Constraint; as considering, that all Events are ordered by a most Wise and Excellent Mind: For this is the only Principle, that can secure you from a que-*

*ulous Temper, and prevent all the impious Murmurings, which Men are used to utter, who imagine themselves neglected, and their Merits over-look'd by a partial Deity. Now for attaining to the good Disposition I have been describing, there is but one possible Method; viz. To disregard the Things of the World, and be fully satisfied, that there is no Happiness or Misery in any other thing, but what Nature hath put within your own power and choice. For, so long as you suppose any external Enjoyments capable of making you happy, or the want of them miserable, you must unavoidably blame the Disposers of them, as oft as you meet with any Disappointment in your Hopes, or fall into any Calamity you fear. This is a Principle fix'd in all Creatures by Nature, and nothing can change or remove it, to run away from a'll that seems hurtful and destructive, and to have an aversion for the Causes of these Things to us. And so likewise to pursue and court the contrary, and love and admire the Persons we owe our Good to. So that no Man can take pleasure in the supposed Author of his Mischief, any more than in the Mischief it self. Hence it is, that Sons complain of their Fathers, and reproach them for not letting them into a greater share of their Estates, in which they place their Happiness. Hence Polynices and Eteocles engaged in that unnatural War, because they placed their Happiness in a Crown. Hence the Husband-man cries out against God, when the Season is unkindly;*

kindly; and the Merchant repines at Storms, and Losses at Sea, and Masters of Families at the death of their beloved Wives and Children. Now no Man can have Religion, without mixing some prospect of Advantage with it; nor can we heartily serve and adore a Being, of whose Justice and Kindness we have not a good Opinion. So that, by making it our Business to regulate our Desires and our Aversions, and direct them to worthy and proper Objects; we do at the same time most effectually secure our Piety. It is necessary also, that you should offer Sacrifices, and conform to the Custom of your Country in the Exercise of Religion; and that all things of this kind be performed with Sincerity and Devotion; not slovenly and carelessly, but with a decent Application and Respect; and that your Offerings be, according to your Ability, so temper'd, as neither to betray an Unwillingness or sordid Grudging in one extrem, nor to run out into the other of Profuseness and Ostentation.

## C O M M E N T.

AFTER the Duties expected from us to our Equals, that is, of Men to one another; he proceeds now to instruct us what we owe to our Superiours; viz. those of a Nature more excellent than our own. And in all Disquisitions of this kind, it is a very convenient Method, to begin with those Things that are nearest and most familiar to us, and so by degrees ascend to those above, and at a greater distance from us.

Now

Now these Duties are likewise discovered by taking a just View of the Relation between the Gods and us, and that is such an one, as Effects bear to their Highest and First Causes.

If then they are to be considered under this Notion, it is evident, that they stand not in any need of our Services; nor can we add to their Happiness or Perfection. Our Duties consequently, and the Intent of them are only such, as may express our Subjection, and procure us a more free access and intercourse with them: For this is the only Method of keeping up the Relation to First and Highest Causes. The Instances of this Subjection due from us, are Honour, and Reverence, and Adoration, a voluntary Submission to all they do, and a perfect Acquiescence in all Events order'd by them; As being fully satisfied, that they are the Appointments of Absolute Wisdom and Infinite Goodness.

These are such Qualifications, as we must attain to, by rectifying the *Ideas* of our Minds, and reforming the Errours of our Lives. The *Ideas* of our Minds must be rectified, by entertaining no Thoughts of the Gods, but what are worthy of Them, and becoming *Us*; as, That they are the First Cause of all Things: That they dispose of all Events, and concern themselves in the Government of the World; And, That all their Government, and all their Disposals are Wise, and Just, and Good. For if a Man be of Opinion, That there is no God; or if he allow his Existence, but deny his Providence; or if he allow both these, but think that God and that Providence defective in his Counsels, or unjust in his Distributions; such an one can never pay him true Honour and hearty Adoration, nor submit with a resigned and contented Spirit to the various Accidents of Humane Life, as if all were ordered for the best.

Again;

Again ; It is likewise necessary , that the Life and Conversation of Men be so disposed as to express this Persuasion of a Wise and Good Providence, so as not to fly out into peevish Murmurs and Complaints, nor think that Almighty God hath done us wrong in any of his Dispensations. But this is a Temper we can never attain to, so long as we expect Happiness, and dread Misery, from any thing but our selves. The Management of our own Will must be our only Care, and all our Desires and Aversions restrained to the Objects of Choice ; and then we need never be disappointed in our Hopes, nor surprized by our Fears. But this must needs happen to all that place their Happiness and Misery, in the Enjoyment, or the Want of any external Advantages ; and such Disappointments and Surprizes will necessarily carry them to a Detestation of that, which they look upon as the cause of such Misfortunes. And they will very hardly refrain from speaking ill of that Power, which might have prevented their Misery, but took no care to do it. For every Creature naturally desires Good, and abhors Evil ; and therefore not only the Things themselves, but the Causes of them are shunned and hated, courted and admired, in proportion as they really are, or as we apprehend them to be, Good or Evil. There is no such thing in Nature, nor can there be, as that a Man should take Delight in, and bear a true Affection to the Person whom he looks upon to have done him some real Injury or Hurt, any more than he can be fond of that Hurt or Injury it self. And since all Good naturally attracts our Love and Desire, and all Evil provokes our Aversion, we must needs be affected alike, both to the Things themselves, and the Causes of them to us.

And though we be mistaken in our Notions of Good and Evil, yet that we shall proceed according

ding to our apprehensions of these Things, as if they were really so, and cannot restrain our selves from hating and reviling the Authors of our Calamity, or the Deceivers of our Hope, he proves from hence, That the strictest Ties of Nature, and Duty, and Affection, are generally found too feeble Engagements to keep Men in Temper, or moderate their Resentments. Thus we see greedy and impatient Children perpetually railing at their Fathers for keeping them out of their Estates, which they account their Good ; or for inflicting some Severities upon them which they think Evil ; as when they chastise their Follies, or deny them their Liberty. And thus *Oedipus* his two Sons, *Polynices* and *Eteocles*, forgetting that they were Brothers, quarrell'd, and kill'd one another for the Crown in which they were Rivals. Thus the Farmer ; when his Seed-time or his Harvest happens ill ; if it rain too much, or too little, or if any other cross accident come to his Crop, presently rails and murmurs against the Gods ; or if he have the modestly to hold his tongue, yet he is sure to fret and curse inwardly. Thus Mariners, when they want a fair Wind, and though they are bound to different Ports, and must sail with different Winds, one perhaps wishes for a Northern, another for a Southerly Gale, and the same can never serve or please them all ; yet they swear and rant at Providence, as if it were obliged to take care of Them only, and neglect all Those, whose Business requires it should blow in the Quarter where it does. So likewise Merchants are never content : When they are to buy, they would have great plenty, and a low Market ; but when it is their turn to sell, then they wish for scarcity, and a rising Price : And if either of these happen otherwise, they grow discontented, and accuse Providence. And in general, when Men bury their Wives, or Children, or have something

thing very dear taken from them, or fall into some disaster they feared, they grow angry at the *Disposer* of these Events. For we are naturally inclined to honour and respect the Persons that oblige and gratifie us; and, as nothing excites these Resentments in us so soon, or so powerfully, as our own advantage; so nothing gives such an effectual disgust, and so irreconcilable a disrespect, as the apprehension that any Person hath contributed to our loss and disadvantage.

So that a Man, in taking care to fix his Desires, and his Aversions, upon right Objects, does at the same time secure his Piety and Reverence for God; for this Man's Hopes are always answered, his Fears always vanish into nothing; for he neither hopes nor fears any thing out of his own power; He is consequently always pleased, and under no Temptations to accuse Providence, for any thing that can possibly happen to him. But the Man that gives his Desires a Loose, and expects his Fate from external Accidents, is a Slave to all the World: He lies at the mercy of every Man's Opinion, of Health and Sickness, Poverty and Riches, Life and Death, Victories and Defeats; nay, even the Wind and the Rain, the Hail and the Meteors; and, in short, every Cause and every Effect in Nature is his Master. For, except every one of these fall out just according to his mind, his Desires must be frustrated, and his Fears accomplished. What a Weathercock of a Man is this! How uneasy and unsettled his Life! How tedious and troublesome must he be to himself! How dissatisfied in his Breast, and how impious in his Reflections upon Providence! So that, in short, there is no one Circumstance wanting that can conduce to the rendring such a one miserable.

Having thus laid the Foundations of Religion, in true Notions of the Divine Nature, in a contented



tented Submission to all Events, and in a firm Persuasion of a Wise and Good Providence, that disposes them as we see ; and, having moreover shewn the necessity of despising the World, and depending upon our own Will and the Objects of it, for all the Happiness and Misery we are capable of ; he proceeds now to direct us, what methods we should take to express our Reverence and Honour for the Gods. Some of those that are generally practised, and become universal, it is highly probable that God himself instituted, declaring (as some Histories inform us he did) what Services would be most acceptable to Him ; and this with a gracious Design of bringing us better acquainted with Himself, and likewise to sanctifie and enlarge our Enjoyments, that our Offerings might invite his Blessings and his Bounty, and, for giving back a little, we might receive the more.

As therefore we hold our selves bound, in the first place, to set apart that Soul which we received from him, to his Service, and to consecrate it by refined and holy Thoughts, by worthy and reverent *Ideas* of his Majesty, and a regular uncorrupt Life ; so it should be our next care to purifie and dedicate this Body too, which came to us from the same Hand ; and carefully to wash away all the seen or hidden Blemishes and Pollutions, which it may have contracted. When the Soul and its Instrument are thus clear from all their Stains, let us come decently cloathed into his presence, and there devote a part of what God in his Bounty hath conferred upon us, to his Use and Service. For it is highly reasonable and just, that a Part should be given back to him from whom we receive the Whole : Not that he needs, or is the better for it : (nor is he so indeed, either for the Holiness of our Lives, or the reverent and worthy *Ideas* we have of him : And so this Objection, if it were a good one,

one, would lie equally against all Piety in general) but it is for our own advantage : For, when we have thus qualified our selves for his benign Influences, he communicates himself to us, in such proportions as we are capable and worthy of. So do the Offerings we devote out of our Fortunes, when recommended by a pure Conscience and a good Life, derive down the Blessing and Goodness of God upon our Estates, and procure us signal Testimonies of the Power and Efficacy of his Providence. One Man hath found them the Instruments of a marvellous recovery from some Epilepsie, or other incurable Distemper ; Another of calming boisterous Winds and Seas ; besides the Divine Favour and Illumination, which the Votaries often acquire by such Religious Services. But if there were none of these advantageous Effects to follow, yet it must be confess'd a most equitable thing, and a decent expression of Gratitude, to pay back these Acknowledgments to the Giver of all we enjoy : How much more then, when the parting with so small a proportion sanctifies and consecrates the whole, and ensures his Favour and Assistance in our Undertakings ?

Now, as to the kind and the manner of these Oblations, he would have us determined by the Custom of our Country. For there is this mighty Difference, among others, between God and Us ; He is present at all times, and in all places, and equally disposed to exert his Power, and communicate his Influences, the whole World over. But We are confined within a narrow compass ; we, as men, are but one of the many Species which God hath created, and of the many, who partake of the same Nature, have applied our selves to one Profession and Way of Life, out of many : Our Habitations are distinct, and confined to one little Spot of this vast Globe ; and so we partake of the Divine Goodness, some in one place and time, and  
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some in another. Thus there are Countries opposite to us, whose Night is our Day; and Climates so distant, that it is Winter in one, and Summer in another, at the same time. So likewise Fruits and Animals are peculiar to some Countries, and do not grow nor breed in others; the Divine Bounty imparting it self to all the World, and every Creature in it, though to different parts of the World, in different manners. As therefore the particular manifestations of God are suited to several Places and Professions, and Seasons and Modes; so in the choice of Victims and Acknowledgments, each Person and Country observe what is peculiar to them, and proper for their Circumstances. And, when by common Consent solemn Festivals are celebrated as they ought to be, for the Honour and Worship of God, a more extraordinary effect of the Divine Favour and Influence is frequently seen upon these Occasions; as miraculous Cures, strange and useful Predictions, and the like. Such remarkable efficacy do we find, and so much more signal Testimonies of the Divine Presence and Aid may we observe at one time above another. And the same Success is no less observable, in the proper Choice and Accommodation of the Places in which we worship, the Supplications we use, the Ceremonies we conform to, and the Oblations we present.

Now all the Religious Performances, by which we would express our Honour for God, ought, he says, to be attended with Holiness and Sincerity, and not done in a slovenly and sordid manner: For it is by no means fit, that any impure thing should presume, or be admitted, to make its approach to the Purest and most Perfect Being: And any mixture which adulterates what is pure and sincere, does at the same time pollute and stain it. Therefore nothing of this kind is to be done slovenly

slovenly and fordidly; for that is *Epictetus* his meaning; and the Word he makes use of to express it, signifies such Dust and Nastiness, as is contracted from lying upon a dirty Floor. Nor must we behave our selves loosely and negligently, so as, through Idleness and Inadvertency, to leave out, or change, or to confound the Order of any part of our Worship. For, as Words are not the same, if you leave out, or put in, or invert the course of the Letters; nor Sentences the same, if you confound the Words they consist of; so the Neglects and Wandrings of a Loose Worship check the Divine Influences, and render all his Devotions flat and feeble; as, on the contrary, a wise and steady Zeal is the best Recommendation of our Prayers, and gives them such energy and force, as never returns empty. And, indeed, what is there of so great Consequence, or so strict Obligation, as to be able to rouse a Man into Thought, and dispose him to Warmth and Attention, if the Presence of God, and his solemn Approaches to so awful Majesty, have not the power to do it? Hence it is, that we are advised to address our selves with reverence and fear; for nothing is more offensive, than a saucy, irreligious Boldness. And the greater Veneration we hold all things that bear a relation to God and his Worship in, the more advantage we shall receive from them, and, by humbling our selves before the Throne of God, we take the most effectual method to be truly exalted.

But, fearing that some might possibly put a wrong Interpretation upon what he had said; and suppose, that, by forbidding Men to be cold and fordid, he intimates, that they should, upon all occasions, come up to the utmost, or rather strain a point, and go beyond their power; therefore he prevents that mistake in the Close of the Chapter. And indeed, if Moderation be a Vertue, it cannot

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shew it self any where to more advantage, than in the Business of Religion : The very end whereof is to reduce all things to their just proportions, and keep them within due bounds. Besides, nothing tends more to the preserving of Religion, and keeping up the constant Practice of it, than for Men to proceed in the same even course, with as few Alterations as the thing is capable of ; for Custom and frequent Repetition make Men perfect and easie : But whatever is excessive and upon the stretch, we can never be reconciled to, so as to make it our daily Business.

And further, the Men that strain themselves to be profuse in their Sacrifices, or any other way to exceed what others do, and, what their own Circumstances will bear, seem to do it out of a very mean and mistaken Principle : For this looks as if God were to be bribed in their favour, and the value of the Present laid an Obligation upon him : Whereas, alas ! all these things are done, not for his sake, but our own ; and the First Fruits which we consecrate to him, are designed for no other than decent Acknowledgments of his Liberality, and a small return out of what he hath been pleased to give us.

Thus have I trod in the Steps of this excellent Man, and done him what Right I could in the *Paraphrase* and Explanation of the Chapter before us. But now, because in the beginning he touches upon three Points concerning the divine Nature, and these so fundamentally necessary, that all Positive Laws, and all Moral Institutions, do presuppose the belief and Acknowledgment of them ; And since some perverse and refractory Men have nevertheless the Confidence to oppose them, we will so far comply with their Obstinacy, though most unreasonable, as to prove the Truth of these Three Points, *viz.* That there is a divine Nature and Power ; That the World

World is governed by it; and, That the Providence by which it is so governed, is Just and Good in all its Dispensations. The Importunity of these Men is so much the greater, and our trouble of refuting it will be the less; because, not Mankind only, but Brutes and Plants, and every Creature in the World, do according to their Capacity, all declare their Relation to God. Men indeed do so the most of any, because they are early instructed by their Parents, Religion grows up with them from their Cradle; and the Ideas common to their whole Species take root in, and carry a great Sway with them. For the Barbarous, as well as the Civilized Countries, and that in all Ages of the World too, though they have differ'd exceedingly in other Opinions, yet have ever agreed universally in this, That there is a God. I know of no Exception to this Rule, except those *Acrotheites*, of whom *Theophrastus* gives an Account, that they owned no Deity; but as a punishment of their Atheism the Earth opened and swallowed them up. Besides them we meet with no People, and but very few single Persons, that ever pretended to disown this, not above Two or Three, from the beginning of the World to this Day.

But yet so it is, that a great many People do not duly attend to these universally received Notions, partly because they take them upon Trust, without considering or understanding the Arguments upon which they are grounded: And partly, from some Difficulties in Providence, such as the Mistortunes and Afflictions of some very good, and the Prosperity of some exceedingly wicked Men, which are apt to raise in them the same Scruple with that in the Tragedian.

*Pardon ye Powers, if yet such Powers there be;  
For sure that Doubt is modest, when we see  
Triumphant Vice, and injur'd Piety.*

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Now such Persons as these would soon be convinced, if they did but follow *Epictetus* his Method, and not imagine, that either the Happiness or Misery of a Man can depend upon external Accidents, or indeed upon any thing else, but the Freedom and Use of his own Will. For at this rate it will not be possible for any good Man to be wretched, or any vicious one happy. And now, if you please, we will consider those Propositions, which are barely laid down by *Epictetus*, and try to prove the Truth of them, by such Arguments as are proper, and occur to my present Thoughts.

The first step I shall make in this Argument, is to consider the Name by which we call this Being, and what the Word GOD signifies. And here we must observe, That the *Greek* Word Θεός, was applied to the Stars, and other Celestial Bodies; which therefore were so called from Θέναι, which signifies to Run, and had that Appellation given them for the swiftness of their Motion. But this Title was afterward extended to Incorporeal Causes, and Intellectual Beings; and more peculiarly to the First Cause and Being of all Things. So that by this Name we understand the Original of this Universe, the First, and Principal, and Intellectual Cause of every Thing. For, whatever hath any existence, must either be derived from some Determinate Cause, or it must subsist by Chance, and Mechanical Necessity. But whatever subsists after this manner, hath neither any particular efficient Cause, nor is it self the Final Cause of its own Production: For both these Qualifications are absolutely inconsistent with the nature of Fortuitous Beings, and indeed no less so is the following any constant Rule and regular Method in the Production of them.

Now it is obvious to any considering Person, that the Works of Nature, and of Choice, are a final Cause to the Doer, and the existence of them



is propos'd as that which answers his Design. Thus the Husbandman plants, and sows his Ground, in prospect of the Corn, and the Trees, that will grow upon it. Thus the Coition of all Animals propos'd to it self the continuation of the Species. And in all the Progress of these Productions, there is a constant Order, and fix'd Course observ'd, and some Operations which are proper to the Beginning, others to the Promoting, and others to the Perfecting this Work, each perform'd constantly in their proper place. The Seeds of Plants are first cast into the Ground, then moistned and impregnated there, then they take root and sprout, they shoot up in Straw, or Branches, and so on, till at last they blossom and bud, and bring Fruit to maturity. So likewise that of Animals is cherish'd and enlarged, and formed into an Embryo; which, receiving vital Nourishment, and convenient Growth, is at a stated time brought to a just Perfection, and then comes to the Birth. But still in these, and in all other Cases of the like nature, there is the same Chain of Causes; and these generally keep their fix'd Times and Measures.

So then, if all the Productions of Nature, and all the Effects of Choice, have some particular Cause to which they owe their Being; if the Existence of these things be the final Cause of their Production; and if the same Order and a regular Method be constantly and duly observ'd in the producing them, the natural and necessary Result of this Argument is, That all the Works of Nature, and of Choice; that is, all Things in this whole World, that have any real Existence, are not the Effects of Chance, or Mechanism, but are owing to some particular positive Causes; And, since these Causes must needs be antecedent to their Effects, if They be such as had a Beginning themselves, they must be owing to some others who had a Being an-

tecedent to Theirs; and so we may trace them up, till at last we come to Causes which had no Beginning at all: And these being eternal, are most truly and properly said to Exist, as having never not been, nor owing their Subsistence to any External Cause, but solely to the Inherent Perfections of their own Nature. So that the first and Eternal Causes of Things must needs be Self-existent, or something more noble and excellent than Self-existent, as the following Discourse will convince you.

The same Argument holds as strong with regard to Motion too; for if we trace this up to its beginning, we shall find, that those Bodies which made the first Impressions, were either such as moved by an Internal Power and Principle of their own; or such as were fixed themselves, and had no share in the Motion they impressed upon others. For whatever is moved Mechanically, is moved by something else; and that again by some other thing, and so on for ever: But such an account as this of Motion in *Infinitum*, is neither possible to be, nor to be conceived. For at this rate, if there were no Beginning of Motion, the only Consequence from hence must needs be, That there would be no Mover, nor no Moved Bodies at all: And if we will allow any Beginning, as allow it we must, that First Mover must be either endued with a principle of Self-motion, or it must have no motion at all. But the latter of these it cannot be neither, for this is evident in all motion, that fix'd Bodies are so far from communicating motion to those Bodies that have it not, that on the contrary they check and stop it in those that have, and dispose them always to continue in the same State and Posture, without any manner of alteration. So that Free and Spontaneous motion must at last be resolved to be the first Cause of Mechanical. Now the Things that are concerned in mechanical motion, are such as

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are subject to Generation and Corruption, to Augmentation and Diminution. and to any sort of Alteration, whether that refer to the Qualities of the Things themselves, or whether to their Local Distances and Situations. For whatever is produced could never produce it self; because then it must have had a Being before it was produced, and so begin to be both before and after it self. And whatever receives increase is not augmented by it self; for Augmentation is nothing else, but the addition of something which it had not before. So again, whatever is altered, is altered by some other thing, and not from it self; for alteration is properly the introducing of a contrary Quality. So likewise Local motion cannot be from the Body moving; for since all motions are subject to the Rules I have here laid down, and Generation, Corruption, Augmentation, and Alteration, are all but so many Effects of motion, it is plain this must be derived from something else, and could not set it self on going.

Those things therefore, which are in the Course of Nature superiour to these Productions, and the Causes of necessary motion, must needs be capable of moving themselves. For, if we should suppose but one minute in perfect Repose, nothing would ever move again, except some Free Self moving Agent began the Dance. For whatever is once fix'd, is dispos'd to continue so to all Eternity; and what ever moves mechanically must wait the leisure of some other Body, and cannot stir, till it receive the Impression, and is put into action.

Now whatever the first Principles of Things are, 'tis necessary that they should be of a simple Nature: For all mix'd Bodies are compounded of Simples, and consequently the Ingredients must have a Priority in Nature, before the Composition that is made up of them. And now let us consider some of the grossest and most obvious Bodies, and so by

degrees ascend higher, to try at last, whether it be possible for us to conceive Body to be such a Principle, as Reason will tell us the first Principles of all things must needs have been ; or whether it will not be impossible to conceive, that these Bodies which we see move and subsist, should ever have had that Motion and that Existence from themselves.

For whatever moves it self, is called Self-moving ; either because one part of it is active, and the other passive in this motion ; or else, because the whole is active, and the whole passive. Now if we imagine one part to communicate, and the other only to receive the Impression, still the same Question will return, for that part which begins the motion ; whether this be done from a Principle of its own, or from any external Impulse, and so up, till at last you must be forced to stop at something, which must be acknowledged an entire moving, and entire moved.

The same is to be said of Self-existence too ; for whatever is originally and properly, must be an entire Existence, and the sole and entire Cause of its own Existence : And whatever is so, must be indivisible, and without Parts. For whatever consists of Parts, and is capable of being divided, could never unite its whole self to its whole self, so as to be entirely moving, and entirely moved ; entirely subsisting, and yet the entire Cause of so subsisting at the same time.

Again : It is no less impossible, that any Bodies should be of a simple Nature ; for they must of necessity consist of Matter, and Form, and several other Properties, that must go to the compleating of their Nature ; such as Magnitude, and Figure, and Colour, and sundry other Qualities, which are not original and causal Species themselves, but only participations of these, produced in some Matter without Form, that partakes of them. For, where these Original Forms lie, there every thing is in its true  
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Essence and Perfection, and there is no need of any Matter unform'd to receive them. But, when those Originals are communicated, then there must of necessity be some Matter to receive them, which, till it hath done it, is it self void of Form. Since then the First Principles of Things are incorporeal and indivisible; since their Nature must be simple, and that they are properly Efficient Causes; since their Existence and their Motion must be entirely from themselves; and since it hath been shewed, that Bodies are not in any degree capable of these Qualifications, it must need, I think be concluded, that Body could not be the First Principle, nor the Universe owing to any such Original.

Where then shall we find such a self-moving Agent, as infuses Motion into the necessary ones, and may be considered as a Cause with respect to them? This sure must be something that moves from an internal Principle. But still, if this Motion from within were derived from something else, and not from it self, we should not call this an Internal Motion, but an External Impulse, as we do in Bodies: For if I by a Staff that is in my Hand move a Stone, though both my Staff and my Hand contribute to that Motion more immediately, yet I my self am the true and proper Cause of it. What shall we say then moves Bodies from within? What indeed but the Soul? For, animated Bodies are moved from an internal Principle, and all Bodies so moved are Animates. If then it be the Soul, which gives an internal Motion to Bodies, and if this internal Mover be self-moving, it remains that the Soul is a free and spontaneous Mover, the cause of Productions and beginning of Motions, containing in her self the several Patterns, and Measures, and Forms, according to which those Productions and Motions are modelled and proportioned. For, if the constituent Forms are not in Bodies originally, but derived

rived immediately from some free Agent, then certainly the Soul is the efficient Cause, and assigns to each Body its particular Form. Now these Forms in the Soul, are exceeding pure and untainted : As for Example : Beauty in the Body of an Animal consists in the Flesh, and Skin, and Vessels, and Blood, that make and fill up this Mass. Now it does indeed to the best of its power, temper and adorn these things ; but at the same time it is sullied and changed by them, and sinks into their Deformity. But now this Beauty in the Soul is free from all these Allays, and is not only the Image and Representation of Beauty, but pure, substantial, unblemished, original Beauty ; not graceful in one place, and not in another, but perfectly and all over so. From whence it comes to pass, that when the Soul contemplates its own or another Soul's Beauty, all bodily Graces lose their Charms, and appear despicable and deformed in comparison. And this instance hints to us the Purity of all other original Forms, as they are in the Soul.

Now it is very plain, that as there are different Bodies moved by these Souls, so there are likewise different sorts of Souls that move them ; and some of these are celestial, and others sublunary : For it were an intolerable absurdity to suppose, that Bodies less refined, and inferiour in Dignity and Duration, should have Life, and Souls, and that those above should want both. It is therefore in this case with Souls, as with Bodies ; the heavenly ones are the Causes of the sublunary ones. And indeed the Soul is a noble and most excellent Being, especially the heavenly one, advanced by Nature to the Prerogative of being a Principle, though not the First and Highest in the Order of Causes. For, though the self-moving and self-existent Being, is superiour to those, whose Motion and Existence is derived from something else ; yet still even this is capable of being considered

considered in a double Capacity, as Active and Passive, as a Cause and as an Effect; and it is plain, that Simples must have been before Compounds, and One before Two.

Again: Though this self-moving Agent depend upon no other for its Motion, yet Motion it hath: and Motion inferrs Mutation; not an essential Change indeed, but such as respects its Operations: And neither are these Motions Local and Corporeal, (for in that respect it is immovable) but Spiritual, and peculiar to the Soul; such as we call Consideration, and Debate, and Discerning, and Opinion; and, according as she is moved by these motions, she impresses corporeal ones upon the Body.

Now whatever this Change be, yet that, which is mutable in any kind or proportion, must have something before it absolutely immutable, that to those things, that are mutable, may still be preserved so. For all motion and mutation, both above and in our lower Regions, proceeds from the impression made by the First Cause. But since all things undergo such various Changes, and great motions are violent; How come the heavenly Bodies to continue so much the same in their Constitution, their manner of moving, the Centre about which they roul, their mutual Order and Position? And whence is it, that, though the sublunary ones undergo more visible and frequent Alterations, yet still there is a perpetual restitution and constant return to their first Form? Thus we observe it plainly in Elements, and Seasons, and Plants, and Animals: For, though these do not continue to be numerically the same, as Celestial Bodies do, yet they go round in a Circle, till at last they return to the point from whence they set out at first. Thus Fire is converted into Air, Air condensed into Water, Water into Earth, and then Earth rarefied into Fire again. So the Year brings us, first into Spring, then  
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to Summer, after that Autumn, and at last Winter thaws into Spring again. So again, Wheat is turned into the Stem, then the Blade, after that the Ear, and so ripe Wheat again. So from Man proceeds first the Seminal Principle, after that the Formation, and Vital Nourishment; and this at last comes to be Man again. Now I would ask any one, since motion is of it self always violent, and always tending to Change, how it come to pass, that the same Species, and the same Course and Constitution of Nature is so exactly preserved? Certainly this must needs be the Effect of some Superiour Cause, which is it self Immoveable, and Immutable, and remains for ever in all Points exactly the same. For even in mental Motions, that Agent which is uncertain in his Motions, and acts sometimes with ease, and freedom, and speed; and sometimes slowly, and with difficulty, must needs have some other mind antecedent to it; One whose Essence, and whose Operations are always the same, that brings all things to pass in an instant, and at pleasure: And no Man need be told, how much such a Being as this, which is fix'd and unchangeable, not only as to his own Nature and Essence, but as to his Influence too, is more excellent than that which is still in motion, and liable to Change, though that Motion be from it self alone. And Reason will convince us, that those Beings which are most Noble and Excellent, must needs have had an Existence before those that are indigent and depending.

Now we shall do well according to this Rule, to ascend the whole Scale of Causes in our Thoughts, and try whether we are able to find any Principle more Excellent, than what is already fix'd upon; and if we can do so, then to drive that still higher, till we come to rest at last in the loftiest and most majestick Notions that we are capable of entertaining; and this is a Course we may boldly take: nor

is there any fear of going too far, or overshooting the Mark, by conceiving any Ideas too great, and above the Dignity of this First Cause. For alas! the boldest Flights our Minds can aspire to, are too low and feeble, so far from surmounting, that they fall infinitely short of, his Divine Perfections. This Contemplation upon God, as it is the most Excellent, so it is the only One, in which we are sure not to be guilty of any Excess, or an over-valuing the Object. And, when we have taken all imaginable pains to collect all the Ideas that are Great, and Venerable, and Holy, and Independent, and Productive of Good; all these Names, and all these Perfections put together, do yet give us but a very poor and imperfect Notion of him; Only he is graciously pleased to pardon and accept these, because it is not in the power of humane Nature to admit any higher and better.

When therefore our Consideration hath carried us from Self-moving Beings up to that which is Immoveable, and absolutely Immutable, always the same in Essence, its Power, and its Operations; fix'd for ever in a vast Eternity, out of which Time, and all the Motions that measure it, are taken and derive their Being; there we may contemplate the Primitive Causes, of much greater Antiquity than those we observed in the Self-moving Agent; and there we shall see them lie in all their Perfections, Immoveable, Eternal, Entire, United to each other, so as that each should be all by Virtue of this intimate Conjunction, and yet the intellectual Differences between them should remain distinct and unconfused. For what account can be given of so many different Forms in the World, but only, that the Great God and Creator of the World produces these, as he thinks fit to separate and distinguish the Causes of them in his own Mind? which yet we must not suppose to make such actual and incommunicable

municable Differences between the Originals, as we observe between the Copies of them here. Nor are the Distinctions of the differing sorts of Souls the same with those of Bodies. Each of the Eight Heavens we see, and the Constellations peculiar to them, are a part of the whole Heaven taken together, a full and integral Part, and yet each hath its Essence, and Influences, and Operations, proper to it self. And so likewise the Forms of Sublunary, as well as Celestial Bodies, that are always the same, as that of a Man, a Horse, a Vine, a Fig-tree: each of these are perfect and full; though not in Individuals, as the Heavenly Bodies are: yet according to the Various Species, with which they fill the World, and the Essential Differences, which distinguish them from one another. Just thus it is with those more simple and Intellectual Considerations, of which these Forms are compounded, such as Essence, Motion, Repose, Identity, Beauty; Truth, Proportion, and all those other Metaphysical Qualities, belonging to the Composition of Bodies, each of which is perfect in its own kind, and hath a distinct Form of its own, and many Differences peculiar to it self only. And if this be the Case in so many Inferior Beings, how much more perfect and entire shall every thing subsist in the great Soul of the World? These are the spontaneous Causes of the Bodies here-below, and all their differences lie united there. According to this Pattern, all things here are formed, but that Pattern is abundantly more perfect, and pure, and exact than any of its Resemblances. Much more perfect still then are these Divine and Intellectual Forms than any Corporeal ones, of which they are the great Originals. For these are united, not by any mutual Contract, or Continuity of Matter, or bodily Mixture; but by the Coalition of indivisible Forms. And this Union, being such

as still preserves the Distinctions between them clear and unconfus'd, makes each of them perfect in it self, and qualifies it to be the common Principle and Root of all the Forms of its own Likeness and Kind, from the highest to the lowest.

Now the several distinct Principles of things derive their Causal Power and Dignity from some One Superiour Principle. For it is plain, that Many could not exist without an antecedent Cause. For which Reason each of Many is One, but not such a One as was before those Many. For the One of Many is a part of that Number, and is distinguished from the rest by some particular Qualifications, which give him a Being apart to himself: But the One before Many was the Cause of those Many; He comprehended them all within himself, existed before them, is the Cause of Causes, the first Principle of all Principles, and the God of Gods; for thus all the World, by the meer Dictates of Nature, have agreed to call and to adore him.

He is likewise the Supreme and Original Goodness: For all Effects have a natural desire and tendency to the respective Properties of their first Cause. Now that, which all things desire, is Good; and consequently the first Cause must be the Original, and the Supreme Good. So likewise he must be the Original and Supreme Power: For every Cause hath the highest Power in its own kind, and consequently the first Cause of all must needs exceed them all in Power, and have all of every kind. He must needs be endued with perfect Knowledge too; for how can we imagine him ignorant of any thing which himself hath made? It is no less evident too from hence, that the World, and all things, were produced by him without any difficulty at all. Thus, by considering of particulars, we are at last arrived to a general Demonstration, and from the parts have learnt the whole, (for indeed

indeed we had no other way of coming to the Knowledge of it, but by its parts; the Whole it self is too vast for our Comprehension, and our Understandings are so feeble, as often to mistake a very small part for the whole.) And the result of the Argument is this, That, as all Things and Causes are derived at last from One Cause, so they ought to pay all manner of Honour and Adoration to that Cause. For this is the Stem and Root of them all; and therefore it is not an empty Name only, but there is a Similitude in Nature too, by which every Cause is allied to this Universal One. For the very Power and Priviledge of being Causes, and the Honour that is due to them, when compared with their Effects, is the free Gift of this Supreme Cause, to all the inferiour and particular ones.

Now if any Man think it too great an Honour for these lower and limited ones to be called *Causes*, or *Principles*, as well as that original and general one; It must be owned in the first place, That there is some Colour for this Scruple, because this seems to argue an equality of Causal Power. But then this may easily be remedied, by calling These barely Causes, and That the First and Universal Cause. And, though it be true, that each particular Principle is a first and general one, with respect to others of less extent and power contained under it, (as there is one Principle of Gracefulness with regard to the Body, another with regard to that of the Mind, and a third of Gracefulness in general, that comprehends them both;) yet in Truth, and strict Propriety of Speech, none is the First Principle, but that which hath no other before or above it; and so likewise we may, and do, say by way of Eminence, the First and Supreme Cause, the First and Supreme God, and the First and Supreme Good.

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Moreover we must take notice, that this First Cause, which is above and before all things, cannot possibly have any proper Name, and such as may give us an adequate Idea of his Nature. For every Name is given for distinction's sake, and to express something peculiar; but since all distinguishing Properties whatever flow from, and are in Him, All we can do is to sum up the most valuable Perfections of his Creatures, and then ascribe them to Him. For this Reason as I hinted at the beginning of this Discourse, the *Greeks* made choice of a Name for God, derived from the Heavenly Bodies, and the swiftness of their motion. And thus we style him Holy, and Just, and Merciful, and Good, and Lord, and Omnipotent; and sometimes take the Confidence to use such Appellations, as we think applicable to some of the Sons of men.

And thus much shall suffice at present for the First of the Three Points before us; which pretends to shew, That there are First Causes of Things, and that GOD is the truly First and Original of them all. And, though I have pass'd over several Steps, that might have been taken in running from Effects to their Causes, and would perhaps have made the Demonstration more gradual and compleat; yet I must be content to enlarge no farther, as being duly sensible, that some Persons will think what is already done a great deal too much, and that these Excursions are by no means agreeable to my first Design, which was to give as compendious an Illustration as I could, to this Manual of *Epictetus*.

The next Assertion to be proved, was, That this God governs and disposes all Things by his Providence; which, though it be, I presume, largely demonstrated upon several Occasions in the foregoing Chapters, shall yet be allowed a particular Consideration in this place. For some People are ready enough to acknowledge the Being, and the Per-

fections of God ; they acquiesce in his Power, and Goodness, and Wisdom ; but, as for the Affairs of the World, these they do not suppose him to regard at all, nor be in the least concerned for them, as being too little and low, and in no degree deserving his Care. And indeed the greatest Temptation to this Opinion, they frankly own to be ministred, by the very unequal Distribution of Things here below, and the monstrous Irregularities, that the Government of the World seems chargeable withal. They observe some exceedingly wicked Men high in Power and Preferments, their Estates plentiful and growing, their Health sound and uninterrupted ; and thus they continue a prosperous and pleasant Life, to extream old Age, go down to their Graves gently and peaceably, and frequently leave their Posterity Heirs of their good Fortune, and transmit their ill-gotten Wealth to succeeding Generations. In the mean while, many Persons, as eminently vertuous and good, are miserably oppress'd by the Insolence and Barbarity of those wicked Great Ones ; and yet for all this Injustice, there is no Vengeance, that we can observe, overtakes the Oppressor, nor any Comfort or Reward to support the Sufferer. These, as was hinted before, are the Speculations, that give Men the Confidence to dispute against G O D. Some have been so far emboldened by them, as to deny his very Being ; but Others, in compliance with the universal Consent of Mankind, and the natural Intimations we have of Him, are content to allow his Nature and Perfections, but can by no means allow his Providence, and especially, when it happens to be their own case, and their particular Misfortunes have given an edge to the Objection, and made it enter deeper and more sensibly. For then they can by no means be persuaded, that so great an Inequality can be consistent with Providence ; or that G O D  
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can interest Himself in the Management of the World, and yet do a thing so unworthy his Justice, and so contrary to his Nature, as to suffer insulting Wickedness to pass unpunished, and injured Vertue to perish unredressed.

Now the first Return I shall make to this Objection, shall be in more general terms, by desiring the Person who proposes it, to answer me to the several Parts of this dis-junctive Argument.

If there be a God, and not a Providence, then the Reason must be, Either want of Knowledge, and a due Sense, that these Things ought to be his Care ; Or, if he knows that they ought, and yet does not make them so, then this must proceed, either from want of Power, or want of Will. For the want of Power, there may be two Causes assigned ; either, that the Burden and Difficulty of Governing the World is so great, that G O D is not able punctually to discharge it ; or else, That these are Matters so very mean and inconsiderable, that they escape his Notice, and are not worth his Care and Observation. If the Sufficiency of his Power be granted, and the Want of Will be insisted upon, this may likewise be imputed to two Reasons : Either, That he indulges his own Ease, and will not take the pains ; Or else, as was argued before, That these Matters are of so mean Consideration, that tho' he could attend to the most minute Circumstances of them, if he so pleased ; yet he does not do it, as thinking it more becoming the Greatness of his Majesty to slight and overlook them.

This dis-junctive Argument being thus proposed in the general, the several Branches of it may be replied to, as follows : That, admitting God to be such a Being, as hath been here described, perfect in Wisdom and Knowledge, absolute and uncontrollable in Power, and of Goodness incompre-

hensible; and withal, the Original Cause and Author of all Things, produced from and by Himself; and so these being so many parcels (as it were) of his own Divinity, it is not possible, first, he should be ignorant, that the Products of his own Nature, and the Works of his own Hands, require his Care: For this were to represent him more insensible, than the wildest and most stupid of all brute Beasts (since even these express a very tender regard for the Creatures to whom they give Birth and Being.) It is as absurd every whit to say, in the next place, That this is a Care too weighty, and above his Power and Comprehension: For how is it possible to conceive an Effect, greater and stronger than the Cause, to which it entirely owes its Production? And no less so, thirdly, to alledge, That these Matters are neglected, because too little and low to fall within his Observation: For sure had they been so despicable, he would never have created them at all. The want of Will is no more the occasion of such a Neglect: than the want of Power. To suppose this Care omitted, only for the indulging his own Ease, and to avoid the Interruption of his Pleasures, would be to fix upon him the Infirmities and Passions of Men; nay, and such as are peculiar to the worst and most profligate of Men too. For, not only humane Reason, but natural instinct, infuses an anxious Tenderneſs into Brutes, such as suffers them to decline no pains for the Provision and Support of their Offspring. Nor can we in any reason imagine such want of Will, from a Consideration of the Vileness of these Things, since nothing certainly is contemptible in His Eyes who created it; and, whatever he thought worthy the Honour of receiving its Existence from him, he cannot think unworthy that of his Protection and Care. So that, when you have made the most of this Argument  
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that it can possibly bear, still every part meets you with some intolerable absurdity ; and no one of these Considerations, nor all of them put together, can ever induce a Man, who believes that God created all these Things, to think, that he does not now inspect and concern himself for his own Productions.

But now, after this general Consideration, I shall apply my self more particularly to those, who either do really, or would seem to, entertain a due sense of the Divine Majesty ; and in pretended Honour to that, disparage and lower the Affairs of humane Life, as Things below his Notice, and such as it would be an unbecoming Condescension, a debasing of Himself, to express any Care or Concern for.

And here I must take leave to vindicate the Honour of Humane Nature, and tell the Objectors, That Mankind and their Affairs are no such small and contemptible matter, as they have thought fit to represent them. For, in the first place, Man is not only an Animal, but a Rational Creature too ; his Soul is of exceeding Dignity and Value, capable of Wisdom, and, which is more, of Religion ; and qualified for the advancing the Honour of God, above any other Creature whatsoever. There is no manner of ground then for so wild a Supposition, as, That God should undervalue and disregard so very considerable a part of the Creation ; nor are the Actions and Affairs of Men to be thought despicable neither, since they are the Results of a Thinking Mind.

But withal I must add, That they, who thus lessen Mankind, furnish us with another Argument in behalf of Providence, and cut themselves off from taking any advantage of that part of the Objection, which would suppose these things to exceed the Power of God : For the more you disparage Mankind, the more easie still you confess it to take care

of them. The Senses, 'tis true, discern greater Objects with more ease than smaller ( as we find plain by the Proportion of those that affect our Sight, and the Loudness of those that strike our Ears ) but the Faculties of the Mind and Body, quite contrary, bear small Trials, and master them much more easily and speedily, than greater. A Pound weight is carried with less pains than a Hundred, and a half Acre of Ground ploughed sooner and easier than an Acre ; so that, by Parity of Reason, the less Mankind is represented, the less troublesome you make the Government and Care of them to be.

Again: They who deny, That Providence descends to every little Nicety (as they call it) do yet acknowledge a Superintendence over the whole World in general. But what Providence is that, which takes care of the Whole, and not of its Parts? At this rate we shall imagine the Almighty God to come behind what every Art and Science almost among Men pretends to. For the Physician, whose Profession obliges him to study the Distempers and the Cure of the whole Body, does not think himself at liberty to neglect the several Parts; and the same may be said of the Master of a Family, the Commander of an Army, and the Civil Magistrate in a State. For, indeed, which way is it possible to preserve the Whole from ruine, but by consulting the Safety of the Parts, of which it is compounded? Far be it therefore from us to imagine, that Almighty God should betray that want of Skill and Industry, which feeble men attain to; who take care of the Whole, and the several Parts of it, at the same time, and with the same trouble; and this most wisely, for the sake of the Parts themselves in a great measure; but much more with a design to promote the Good of the Whole. Whereas, We poor unthinking Mortals are often tempted to Impatience, by particular and private Misfortunes, not duly considering

sidering, how far these contribute to the Benefit of the Whole.

Now if any Man shall imagine the Disposall of humane Affairs to be a Business of great Intricacy, and Trouble, and Confusion; and consequently that it must needs perplex the Almighty, distract his Mind, and disturb his Happiness: This Person must be taught to make a difference, between the Frailties of a Man. and the Perfections of a God. For it is plain, all this Objection is built upon a vain Imagination, that God is such a Supervisor as one of us; and that He is under the same necessity of attending every part of his Charge distinctly, and proceeding by single and subsequent Actions; so that, while he is employed in one Affair, it is not possible for him to apply his mind to any thing else.

Methinks it were easie for such a Person to reflect, how Law-givers and Princes manage themselves upon these occasions: They ordain wise and convenient Laws, and assign particularly what Rewards shall be given to Merit and Vertue.; what Punishments inflicted upon Vice and Disobedience; what Satisfaction made for Injuries, and the like. And these Laws they contrive so, as to extend even to the smallest matters, so far as they can foresee and provide against them. When this is done, they do not give themselves the trouble of watching and prying into every Corner; they live and enjoy their Ease as they used to do; and the Care they take of the State, is not seen in perpetual Confusion and Disquiet of Heart, but in the Establishment and Observation of these wholesome Constitutions. Now, if Men can have so general an Influence, and so effectual too, without personal anxiety; much more must we confess it possible for God. He founded the World, and formed every Creature in it, and fixed wise Laws for the Government of them all: He considered, that our Actions are such as are pro-

per to Souls; that there is a great mixture of Vertue and Vice in them, and, according as each Person exceeds in the one or the other of these, he allots his Punishment, and his Portion. Some he places more commodiously, and others less so, and ranks us according to our Deserts; those that have done well, with good, and those that have done ill, with worse Souls; and hath determined too, what each of these shall do to one another, and suffer from one another. Now herein is the Justice of God vindicated, that the Fundamental Cause of all these different Fates, is absolutely left to our own disposal: For it is in our Power what sort of Persons we will be; and we may make our selves such as we chuse, and resolve to be, by the native Liberty of our Minds, and by having Vertue and Vice properly and entirely the Object of our own Choice. And besides this, God hath appointed over Men particular Guardian Spirits, which nicely observe the smallest Actions, and are exact in such Retributions, as each Man's Behaviour deserves.

Now in this, the Care of God differs from that of Men; That his Providence did not satisfy it self to constitute Things in good Order at the beginning, and afterwards dispense with any farther Concern about them, nor cease from acting, as the Lawgiver in the State was supposed to do. For indeed, properly speaking, the Goodness of God knows no Beginning; nor is there any time when it was not, and when it did not communicate it self, and make all Things good from its own exuberant Fulness. Nor are we to suppose, that this Inspection requires any laborious attendance, as if God were sometimes present, and sometimes absent; for these are such Confinements, as Bodies and Matter only are subject to; whereas He is present at all times, in all places, with, and above, all Things. And the Providence of this mighty Being, thus Eternal  
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and Omnipresent, and infinitely Good, finds no difficulty in expanding it self, and imparting its Influences to every Creature, as the Dignity of their Nature, and the Deferts of each Individual, require. And, as the Sun sheds his Rays of Light upon the whole World, and every thing partakes of them with different Effects. somethings are made capable of seeing, others of being seen; some blossom and bud, others are impregnated and multiply; some shew black to the Eye, and others white; some grow stiff and hard, others are melted and softened; and all this by the same Light and the same Heat, adapting it self to the several Capacities and Dispositions of the Things upon which it falls: and that too, without any Trouble to the Sun, or the least Interruption to his Happiness: So the Goodness of GOD, most assuredly, whose Gift and Workmanship that very Sun is, knows how to impart it self to every Creature, in such proportions as the Necessities of each require, or the Condition of its Nature will admit, much more easily, than any Creature of the most general Influence can do it; and that, without creating any Perplexity to Almighty GOD, or giving the least disturbance to his Bliss, by so extensive a Care. For God is not like the Works of Nature, which are acted upon at the same time they act, and so spend themselves; nor is his Goodness any acquired Perfection, that it should tire and be exhausted, but natural and unbounded. Nor is he confined to one single Action at a time, (as we find our feeble Minds are) that he should not be able to comprehend or manage so great a variety of Affairs, and yet enjoy Himself in the Contemplation of that Perfect and Supream Good, which is infinitely more excellent, and above the World. For, if when the Soul of Man aspires to perfection, and soars up to God, it be said to converse and dwell on high, and to dispose and govern the

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the World ; How much more just and easie is it to believe, That the Author and Insufer of that Soul must needs, without any manner of difficulty or distraction, guide and govern that Universe which Himself hath formed.

Now, as to that Objection of the amazing Inequality in the Distribution of the Things of this World, I can never yield, That the Prosperity of Ill Men, or the Afflictions of the Good, are of strength sufficient to shake our Belief of Providence. For, in the first place, we wholly mistake the matter ; and it is a very wrong Notion that generally prevails, Of Wicked Men being happy, and Good Men miserable. If this obtain still with my Readers, it is to very little purpose, that such pains have been taken to prove that Necessary Truth, That the Good Man is one who places all humane Happiness and Misery in the Freedom of his own Mind, and the directing this aright to such Objects as fall within the compass of his own Power and Choice ; and, That he who does so, can never be disappointed in his Desires, nor oppress'd by his Fears ; and consequently can never have any Unhappiness befall him. For the Objectors themselves agree with us in the Notion of Evil, That it is the Disappointment of some Desire, or the Falling into something that we fear. So that, even according to their own Rule, the Good Man can never be wretched, nor lie under any misfortune which can make him unhappy, considered as a Man.

On the other side, All men agree in their Notions of wicked men, that they pervert the Course and Design of Nature, and do not live as becomes men. They forget the Privilege God hath given them, and neglect the Use and Improvement of that Liberty, which is the distinguishing Character and Prerogative of Humane Nature ; They look for Happiness from external Advantages, such as Health,  
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and Riches, and Honour, and Power, and High Birth, and sensual Enjoyments, and the like; and the want of these they esteem Misery: for which Reason, all their Desires are fix'd upon these imaginary Good Things, and all their Fears and Aver-sions upon the contrary Evil Ones. Now it is not possible for these outward Things always to answer a man's Wishes and Endeavours: Disappointed Ex-pectations, and surprizing Calamities there must and will be; and therefore these men cannot but be un-happy, by the Confession of the Objecters them-selves. And the very Persons concern'd, if they would but give themselves leave to be serious, and reflect coolly and impartially upon the many Acci-dents of this kind that disquiet them, must needs be driven to a sense and acknowledgment of their own misery.

But, if this do not satisfy, because they are plain-ly prosperous, and succeed above other men, in the Advantages and Interests of the World, I shall make no scruple to affirm, That these Successes do but add to their Unhappiness; For they only put them upon greater Extravagancies, and are so many fresh Temptations to commit more Violence, and cast a greater Blemish upon Humane Nature. And this, I think, must be admitted for an uncontestable Truth, That whatever is contrary to Nature and Duty, must of necessity be both a fault, and a misfortune.

Now because our Auditors are to be dealt with, not only by dry Demonstrations, but by moving and gentle Persuasions, I shall endeavour to win them over to this Opinion, of the only seeming Good and Evil in all external Accidents and Advantages, by reminding them of what was said before; that those things that we commonly call Evil, are not properly so, notwithstanding the Troubles and Un-easinesses that attend them; and that what passes for Good in the Opinion of the World, is very far from  
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being such, notwithstanding all its outward Gaeties and deluding Appearances. Sometimes what we call Evils, are made use of to excellent purposes; they are either sharp Remedies to cure a distemper'd Mind, or wholesome Trial to exercise a sound Virtue. And what we term Good Things, are disposed so, as to illustrate the Justice of God; and are proportioned to the present Occasions, or to the Deserts, of the Persons on whom they are bestowed, and from whom they are taken away. Thus Riches are given to a wise and good man, both for his own ease and comfortable Enjoyment, and also to furnish him with larger Abilities of doing good, and Opportunities to exercise a generous and charitable Disposition. But the very same Things to the vicious man are sent as a Curse, and a Punishment: For the covetous and worldly man makes his Life a perpetual Drudgery and Toil; he enslaves himself to Anxiety and Anguish, and continual Fear; and never enjoys the Plenty he hath taken such pains to procure. And this indeed is a most just and a most ingenious Revenge upon them, that they should thus prove their own Tormenters.

On the other hand, the Luxurious and Extravagant are poorer than the very Beggars in the Streets; to many of these their Riches are their Ruine, by tempting them to excesses, and running them upon dangerous and destructive Courses. So that all the Advantage they make of them, is but to grow the worse, and set themselves farther off from all such Improvements, and such a Conversation, as befits the Dignity of Humane Nature, and are agreeable to the Dictates of Reason. Thus Health, and Power, and Preferments, very often turn to the Prejudice of vicious Men. And these are sent, partly in vengeance to scourge them for their past Follies, and partly as Chastisements to reduce them; that when they have given a Swing to their Appetites,

tites, and gorged themselves with criminal Pleasures, they may at last grow sick of them, throw off their ill Humours, and become reformed Men. For the Tenderneſs of that Good Providence, which is ſo affiduous in promoting the True Happineſs of Souls, is not ſo much to reſtrain us from the groſs and outward acts of Sin, and from gratifying our Appetites by Fear, or any other ſuch curbing Paſſions which uſe to give check to them; but rather, to ſubdue the Appetite it ſelf, and utterly waſte and deſtroy all the evil Habits, that had gained upon us by the frequent indulging of it before. The Subſtance of what I have hinted here, was diſcourſed more largely in ſome foregoing Chapters, (Chap. XIII. and XXXIV.) and there, if the Reader think fit, he may reſreſh his Memory. And ſo much for my Second Argument, in reply to thoſe who deny a Providence, and would make us believe, that GOD hath no Hand at all in the Government and Diſpoſal of things here below.

And now, as the old Proverb hath it, (*The \* Third Cup to Jove, and then we have done;*) for there remains only One Objection more to be reſuted; which, though it own both God and his Providence, yet does not profeſs it ſelf ſatiſfied with the Juſtice of either, in the Government of the World.

They repreſent Almighty God, as one capable of being perverted and byaſſed with Gifts and Oblations. And indeed it is a modern, and but too vulgar Imagination, that the moſt greedy Extortioner, and the mercileſs Oppreſſor, that minds nothing but his own Inter-eſt, and makes, or regards, no difference between Right and Wrong, if he do but expend a very inconfiderable part of his ill-gotten

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\* This is an Expression taken from the Cuſtom of the Olympic Entertainments, and other publick Feaſts. See Eraſm. Adag. and Pindar. Iſthmiorum. Hymn. Sext.

Wealth upon pious Uses, and distribute a piece of money among those, who pretend it is their Business to address to the Gods, and that they have a secret Faculty of inclining their Favour, then all shall be well; they may persist in their Wickedness securely, and shall never be called to account for it. And some indeed there are, who both entertain these Opinions without any Judgment, and declare without any due Caution, that they think it no Reflection upon the Goodness of God, that he should connive at Mens Wickedness, and pass it by patiently.

What Answer shall we find now to refute this Error? The best course will be to take it in pieces; and, because it refers both to the Person that does, and to him that receives the Injury, to examine of what Consequence this Remission and Indulgence would be to both, and how each of them are affected and concerned in it.

Now, if it be for the Interest and real Advantage of the wicked and unjust Person, to have his vicious Courses connived at, and that no Punishment at all should be inflicted for them; then it is possible God may remit and wink at them, because it is most certain, that every good thing, of what kind soever it be, is derived down from that Original Source of all Goodness, upon his Creatures here below. But if this would really be the worst and most destructive of all Evils, to have their Wickedness thus assisted and encouraged; if Impunity would only harden them in Vice, and render them but so much more bold and unreclaimable; then how can we admit so absurd a thought, as that God should become accessary to all this Mischief, who hath been so largely and clearly proved, to have no hand at all in bringing any of our Evils upon us?

Now

Now Injustice, and Avarice, and Intemperance, and Injuries, and Extravagances of all sorts, are but so many Corruptions and Indispositions of the Mind; they are contrary to Nature, and no better than the Diseases and Scandals, as well as the Vices, of Mankind. If God therefore contribute to the growth of these Distempers, if he add to their Malignity, and let them go on till they are past all Cure, the Misery and Corruption will be charged upon him. But if Presents and Bribes prevail upon him to do so, this is something more vile and mercenary, than even the ordinary sort of Men, who can boast of no remarkable Vertue, will stoop to. For, Who of a moderate Understanding, and common Honesty, will suffer his Charge to perish for Hire? Will any tolerable Physician, when he finds his Patient surfeited, for the sake of a good Fee, or the Intercession either of his Friends, or himself, permit him to eat and drink freely of those very things that brought the Distemper? nay, which is more, Will he not only permit, but procure them, and assist the sick person in that which must prove his certain Ruin? So far from it, that if he at all answer the Character and Duty of his Profession, he will let nothing divert him from the most ungrateful Remedies, and painful Applications, when the State of the Distemper requires them. Since then the angry Justice of God, and the avenging Dispensations of Providence, have been so fully shewn, to carry in them the Nature and Design of Medicines, to distempered Mankind; how can we suppose this great Physician of Souls, less careful of our Recovery, than we think our selves obliged to be to one another?

But the Persons, who are oppress'd by Injustice, are no less the Object of his Providence, than those who commit it; and therefore we shall do well to examine a little, how this easiness, to wicked Men,  
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and this assisting and encouraging their Villanies, for the sake of their Oblations, can be reconciled with his Tenderness and Care for the innocent Sufferers. What Opinion must we needs have of that General, who would suffer himself to be corrupted by the Enemy, and deliver up his Camp and whole Army for Reward? Or what Shepherd would be so treacherous to his Flock? Shepherd did I say? nay, What Shepherd's Curs, when they have recovered a part of their Flock from the Wolves, will sit down contentedly, and see the rest devoured? And then sure this part of the Argument needs no farther Confutation, than only to reflect, what monstrous Impiety that Opinion is guilty of, that taxes God with such Infidelity, and Baseness to his Charge, as not Men only, but even brute Beasts, disdain and abhor.

Indeed, if we consider the thing only in the general, it is most irrational to conceive, that the Offerings of wicked Men should ever prevail upon God, or encline him to be propitious at all. 'Tis true, he graciously accepts those of the Pious and Upright; not for any respect to the Gifts themselves, or any occasion he hath for them; but for the sake of the Votaries, who, when they thus apply, desire that, not only their Minds, but their Estates, and all they possess, may be consecrated to his Use and Service. There is likewise no doubt to be made, but the matter might be so ordered, as even to render the Gifts and Prayers of wicked men acceptable to him; that is, provided they came with a purpose of growing better, and begg'd to be reformed by his Punishments, and were ready to submit to the Methods of their Cure. But if the secret and true Intent of their Devotions be only to avert his Judgments, and confirm themselves in Vice, it is most absurd to suppose they can ever be well received upon these Terms; for, though there were no Guilt



to be laid to their Charge, yet this alone were sufficient to render them abominable in the Sight of God, That they suppose him a Base and a Mercenary Being, and hope by Bribery to soften his provoked Justice, and buy off their own Punishment.

And now I expect to have the Question put, from whence this Notion of God's pardoning mens Sins, came to be so universally received; and what Foundation there is for saying, and believing, as almost every body does, That Prayers, and Alms, and the like, have a power to make God flexible and propitious. For sure the World hath not taken all this upon Trust, and yet they are much to blame to lay that stress they do upon it, and to propagate this Opinion with so much Confidence, if it be unsafe, and impious to be believed, that God forgives wicked Men, and passes by their Offences, without punishing them, as they have deserved.

In order to the satisfying this Doubt, we must observe, That, where men are duly sensible of their Faults, and heartily penitent for them, these things contribute very much to their Conversion, as being decent and proper Testimonies of a sincere Repentance. The Bending of the Knees, and Bodily Prostrations, express the Sorrows and Submissions of a dejected Soul; and the Offering up their Goods, or laying them out to Pious and Charitable Purposes, such as God peculiarly regards and delights in, proclaims how entirely their Minds, and Persons, and all they have, are devoted to him.

For when we are told, That our Sins turn God's Face away from us, That he is angry at them, and leaves, or forsakes us, upon the Provocation they give him; These Expressions must not be taken in a strict and literal Sence. They speak the Passions and Infirmities of Creatures, such as carry no Congruity with the Divine Nature, and its immutable Happiness and Perfections. But the Truth is, we deprave and debase our selves by forsaking the Dictates of Nature and

Reason ; we deface the Image of the Divinity in our Souls, and, by our Wickedness and Folly, fall off, and withdraw our selves from him : Not that we can run away from that watchful Eye to which all things are present ; but we change the manner of its Influences upon us, and expose our selves to a different sort of Treatment ; for now we have brought a Disease upon our Souls, and made Severity and a harsher Providence necessary for our Cure.

But, when we recover the soundness and perfection of our Nature, and make nearer Approaches to God, by restoring that Image and Character of his Divinity in us, which consists in the imitation of his Justice, and Holiness, and Wisdom, we then return, and are admitted to a more easie Access ; We renew our Acquaintance, and contract a sort of fresh Affinity with him. And this return of ours to God, we often express in such Terms, as if it were his return to us ; Just as men at Sea, who when their Cable is fastned to a Rock, while they draw themselves and their Vessel to the Rock, are so idle as to imagine that they draw the Rock to them. And this is our Case ; Mens Repentance, and Devotions, and Works of Piety and Charity, answer exactly to that Cable : For these things are the Instruments of their Conversion, and the best Proofs of its being unaffected and real. When we cherish and support either the Persons themselves who have suffered by our Oppression, or our Insolence, or our Slanders ; or, if that cannot be, make Satisfaction to their Families, and relieve those that are in necessity ; when we hate Injustice, when we decline the Conversation of naughty men, and become the Companions and Friends of the Wise and Vertuous ; and when we are full of Indignation against our selves, and content to turn our own Punishers. And if we would be thoroughly reformed indeed, we must persevere in this method, and not suffer our Resolutions to be fickle and uncertain ; or any Intermissions to cool our zeal, till we have acted a sufficient

sufficient Revenge upon our selves, and perfected the Design of our Amendment. And there is not, there cannot be, any other certain Testimony of a sincere and perfect Repentance, but only this One, That of forsaking our Sins, and doing so no more. Nay, I must add too, The not allowing our selves in any less or lower degrees of Guilt, or complying with the Temptations and Tendencies toward them. For in this Case we must behave our selves like Sailers, who steer their Course beyond the Point they would make, and bear down towards one side, when they would cross over to the other.

Now, as to the Efficacy of Repentance, whether it be of Merit and Power enough to restore the Soul to its primitive Purity ; this, I think, can admit of no Dispute, when it is considered, That Almighty God does in all his Dispensations propose it as his End, and always cleanse and reform us by this Means. For what other account can be given of all the Punishments, and those dire Effects of his Vengeance upon us, both in this, and the next World, but only, that they are designed to change the Soul, by the Suffering, and Tortures inflicted upon it, that a Sense of her own Wretchedness may provoke her to a just Detestation of the Vices that were the wicked Cause of it ; and inflame her with the more fervent Love, and impatient Desire of Vertue ? There is indeed something very instructing in Affliction, and a strange Aptness in the rational Soul, to hearken to it, and be taught by it. But a Man is never so well disposed to learn, nor makes such quick and sure Progress, as when he exercises this Discipline upon himself, because then the very Punishment is voluntary, and the Improvement is much more likely to be so. And indeed, considering that Pleasure and sensual Prospects tempt Men to offend ; the Rule of curing Diseases by their Contraries, makes Sorrow and Pain absolutely necessary, to remove this Sickness of the Mind, and expel the Humours that brought it upon us. And Repentance

wants no Qualifications of this kind ; for the truly penitent Person chastises himself with the Scourge of a guilty Conscience, and feels such bitter Remorse, and Anguish of Heart ; as are infinitely sharp and stinging, and more inconsoleable, than any Smart or bodily Pains can possibly be.

And thus much in opposition to the Third Objection against God and Religion, which is indeed the worst and most impious of all the Three. For it were a much more excusable Error to deny a God and a Providence, than to allow both these, and yet advance such Incongruous Notions concerning him ; better it were for Us and Him both, that he had no Being, and no Concern in governing the World at all, than that he should be guilty of so much Treachery and Baseness as this Objection lays to his Charge : For this is to be Evil, and that is much worse than not to be at all. The reason is evident, because Goodness and Happiness is Superiour to Existence ; it is the Principle of Being, the Cause from whence all things derive it, and the very End for which they have it. For Existence itself is what no Man would desire, but meerly upon the Apprehension of its being Good ; and therefore, whenever we apprehend our selves in Evil Circumstances, we naturally wish not to be at all.

If I have here again enlarged beyond the just Bounds of a Commentary, the Importance of the Argument will justifie me in it. For, in Truth, a regular and well-grounded Devotion towards God, Just and Becoming Apprehensions concerning the Perfections of his Nature, the Certainty of his Providence, and the Justice and Goodness of all his Proceedings with Mankind ; and, consequent to such a Perswasion, a submissive resigned Temper, and easie Acquiescence under all his Dispensations, as the Effects of a most excellent Wisdom, and such as are always best for us : These are the Sum of all humane Accomplishments, the Foundation and the Perfection, the First and the Last Step of all Moral,

Moral, and all Intellectual, Vertue. For, though the Soul of Man be ('tis confels'd) a Free Agent, and proceed upon Internal Principles of Good and Evil; yet still this Liberty and Power of determining herself, was the particular Favour and Gift of God; and therefore, while she holds fast by the Root, she lives, and improves, and attains the Perfection God made her capable of. But when she separates herself, and, as it were, disengages, and tears herself off, she grows barren, and withers, and putrifies, till she return, and be united to the Root again, and so recover her Life and Perfection once more. Now nothing, but a firm and a vigorous Sense of these Three Points we have been explaining, can ever prevail upon the Soul to endeavour such a Restoration: For how is it possible to apply to God, when we do not believe that he is? Or what Encouragement is the belief of his Existence, without a Perswasion that he is concerned for us, and takes notice of us? Least of all should we address to a Being, that does inspect and govern our Affairs, if we were possess'd with an Opinion, That all that Care and Inspection were directed to Evil and Malicious Purposes, and that he only waited over us for our Misery and Mischief.

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## C H A P. XXXIX.

*When you consult the Oracle, remember it is only the Event that you are ignorant of, and come to be instructed in. But, though you do not know what that shall be particularly, yet Philosophy (if you have any) hath already taught you, of what Quality and Consequence it shall prove to you: For you are satisfied before-hand, That if it be any of the Things out of our own Power, it must needs be indifferent in its own Nature, and neither good nor bad of it-*

self. Therefore when these Occasions call you abroad, leave all your Hopes and Fears behind you; and do not approach the Prophet with such anxious Concern, as if you were to hear your Doom from his Mouth; but behave your self as becomes a Man fully persuaded, That no external Accident is any thing to You; and that nothing can possibly happen, but what by good Management may be converted to your Advantage, though all the World should endeavour to obstruct it. When therefore you address to the Gods, come boldly, as one that asks their Advice; and withal, when they have given it, be all Compliance; for consider whose Counsel you have ask'd, and how impious a Disrespect it will be not to follow it. When therefore you apply your self to the Oracle, observe Socrates his Rule, To ask no Questions, but what the Event is the only material Consideration to be cleared in; they should be Matters of great Importance and Difficulty, and such as are not capable of Resolution, by Reason, or Art, or any humane Methods. But if you are in dispute, whether you ought to assist your Friend in distress, or expose your Person for the Defence of your Country; these are not Questions fit to be put, because they answer themselves: For, though the Sacrifice be never so inauspicious, though it should portend Flight or Banishment, loss of Limbs, or loss of Life; yet still Reason and Duty will tell you, That, in despite of all these Hazards, you must not desert those that have a right to your Service and Assistance. And therefore in this case you need no other Determination than that memorable one, which Apollo gave  
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*so long since, when he thrust that Wretch out of his Temple, who suffered his Friend to perish for want of help.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**fter having given Directions for the understanding and due discharge of our Duty to one another, and towards God; the next thing to be done, was to inform us, What we owe to our selves. But, before this could be methodically undertaken, it was necessary to take notice of a sort of mix'd Duty, which respects both God and our selves; and this is what arises from Divination, or the consulting of Oracles. To this purpose he divides his Discourse into Three Parts, and tells us, upon what Occasions we ought to consult them, with what Disposition it should be done, and what use is to be made of their Determinations.

He begins with the Second of these, thinking it perhaps the First, both in Consequence, and in Order of Nature; and tells us, That the Mind should preserve such a firm and even Temper upon these Occasions, as neither to bring any Desires, nor any Aversions along with it: For at this rate it would be impossible to come without great anxiety and disorder. If our Desires are eager, we shall be afraid of hearing that what we wish will not come to pass; and if our Aversions are violent, we shall be in no less concern to be told, That what we fear most, shall certainly happen to us. But the Question is, What course we shall take to throw off these Passions, and possess our selves with that Indifference? To that he replies, That the Consideration of those Things we enquire about will be able to effect it: For we need only reflect, That they are external Accidents, and Things out of our Power; for no man is so senseless, as to consult an Oracle upon the Events of those, which his own Choice must deter-



mine. Who ever enquired at a Shrine, Whether he ought to regulate his Inclinations and Aversions, to reduce them within just bounds, or to fix them upon fit and Worthy Objects? The *Queries* usually put, are quite of another strain; Whether a Voyage shall be prosperous? Whether it be advisable to marry? Whether the purchasing such a parcel of Land would turn to good account? And these being such things, as we our selves are not made Masters of by Nature, 'tis plain, our Desires and our Aversions ought not to have any concern in the Divination. The only thing we want to be satisfied in, is some particular Event; This is the Soothsayer's Work, and out of the compals of our own Knowledge: But the Quality of that Event we know as well as he. For Philosophy hath assured us, That none of those matters, which are out of our own power, can be in themselves good or evil; and by consequence no proper Object of our Inclination or Aversion.

Besides, They that are skill'd in these Mysteries, have a Notion, That an extream Passion and Concern in the Person that applies to the Oracle, disturbs the whole method of Divination, and confounds the Omen. So that this Calmness will be of advantage in that respect too, and you will escape all immoderate solicitude, when you remember, that, be the Accident whatever it will, you have it still in your power to convert it to your own Benefit; and the more disastrous, so much the more beneficial still will a prudent management render it to you: And therefore *come boldly* (says he) and cast aside vain Fears and unnecessary Scruples, *when you profess to ask Counsel of the Gods.*

From that Expression, he takes occasion to inform Men, what is their Duty to the Gods in these Cases; namely, That when we have asked their Advice, we should be sure to take it: For he that consults God himself, and yet refuses to follow his Advice; Whom will that Man be directed by? And indeed, there is not any more probable nor more frequent ground for

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our Stiffness and Disobedience, than the Prepossession we lie under, and the strong Byals of our own Inclinations and Aversions. So that from hence we have discovered one advantage more, of approaching the Deity with a dispassionate and unprejudiced Mind: For this will not only deliver us from all those Anxieties and Fears, so inconvenient and so hazardous upon such occasions; but it will also dispose us exceedingly to a ready Compliance, and leave us free, to resign our selves entirely to be governed by the Will and Directions of God.

The next Enquiry he goes upon, concerns those things which are the proper Objects of Divination; and these he declares to be such only, whose End is perfectly dark and unknown, so that nothing but the Event itself can give us any light into it; things so purely accidental, that no humane Prudence, no Rules of any particular Art, no helps of Experience and long Observation, can enable us to pronounce what they shall be.

Thus much is agreeable to Reason and common Sense. For no body consults an Oracle, whether it be fit for a Man to eat and Drink, or Sleep, because Nature teaches us the necessity of these Refreshments and we cannot possibly subsist without them: Nor whether it be advisable for a Man to improve in Wisdom, and lead a virtuous Life; for every wise and good Man sees and feels the Advantage of doing so. Nor does he desire the Prophet to resolve him what sort of House he shall build; because this is the Business of a Surveyer, and his Schemes and Models are drawn by Rule and Art. Nor does the Farmer desire to be satisfied, whether he should sow his Corn, or not; for this is a thing absolutely necessary to be done. But he may perhaps enquire, what Season, or what parcel of Land, or what sort of Grain, and which Plants will turn to best account; upon a supposal still (I mean) that Experience, or some other natural Causes, have  
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not instructed him in these things before. Or a Man may reasonably enough ask, if it be proper to undertake such a Voyage, especially if the Season of the Year, or any other Circumstances, contribute to the rendering it hazardous for him.

Nor would it be proper to enquire, whether one should go abroad into the Market, or to *Westminster-Hall*, or walk a turn into the Fields: For though it be true, that even these trivial Undertakings are sometimes attended with very strange and very dismal Consequences, yet generally speaking, they fall out just as we intend, and desire they should. And where there is a very high Probability, and such as is most commonly answered by the Event, there all Divination is needless: If it were not so, nothing in the World could be exempt from it; for the best concluding Reason, and the surest Rules of Art, do not always succeed right: Nature sometimes works out of her common course, and Choice does frequently mistake, and fall short of what is designed. But still there is no difficulty worthy an Oracle in these matters, because we ought to rest satisfied in great Probabilities, and not be disturbed at the few, the very few, Exceptions to the contrary; otherwise we shall be over-run with idle Whimfies, and superstitious Fears, such as improve every little Accident into somewhat terrible and ominous, and would make us utterly unactive, and afraid ever to attempt any thing so long as we live.

But here arises a *Query* worth a little consideration; and that is, Whether the consulting of Oracles concerning matters within our own power, be wholly disallowed: As for instance; What Opinion we ought to entertain of the Soul? Whether it be mortal or immortal? And, Whether we should apply our selves to such a particular Master or not? And the Reason of this doubt is, Because several of the Ancients seem to have consulted the Gods about some Difficulties in Nature; and yet the making such or such a Judgment of Things,

Things, is our own proper act, and confessed to be one of those Things, that come within the compass of our Will.

Now I must needs say, with submission, That whatever is attainable by Reason and Logical Demonstration, ought to be learn'd that way ; for this will give us a clear and undoubted perception, and the discovery of Effects from their Causes is the true scientific Knowledge ; it leaves no Doubt behind it, but satisfies our selves, and enables us to instruct and convince others. Now an assurance from Divine Testimony, that the Soul is immortal, may give us a firm belief of the thing, and we should do ill, and unreasonably, in refusing Credit to such a Testimony ; but still this is only Faith, and differs very much from Science. And if God vouchsafe to communicate to any Man the Knowledge of Natural Causes by immediate Revelation ; this is to be look'd upon as an extraordinary Favour, a special Case, and such as falls not under the common Rules of Divination, nor to be depended upon from it : For the primary Talent, and proper Object of this, is only to instruct Men in such uncertain Events of humane Actions, as no Art or Consideration can bring them to any certain Knowledge of. And, though some Persons have address'd to Oracles for Mysteries in Nature, yet there were but very few that did so, and those, none of the most eminent Reputation for Philosophy neither ; but such as contented themselves with credible Testimonies, and chose rather to take Things upon Trust, than to be at the trouble of attaining to a demonstrative Evidence : Whereas God seems plainly to have designed to have made this the Soul's own Work ; and by infusing into us a Principle of Liberty and Reason, to have left the Contemplation of our own Nature, as one of the Subjects most proper to employ our own Study and Pains. And upon that account both *Epictetus*, and *Socrates* before him, seem to condemn and forbid such Questions, as impertinent and

and superfluous, in regard that the Soul is sufficiently qualified to make those Discoveries by her own Strength.

For the same reason, you see, he disapproves of that *Query*, Whether a Man ought to relieve his Friend in distress, or expose his Person in defence of his Country? Because right Reason cries out aloud, that these things must be done; and no Hazards can be so formidable, as that the most certain prospect of them should justify our neglecting to do so. To what purpose then do we trouble the Gods for that which hath no difficulty in it; and where we must be lost to all sense, if we be not able to satisfy our selves? And besides, he gives us an instance, wherein the Prophetick God declared his Displeasure against One that came to have this Scruple resolved: For what our own Reason will convince us is fit and necessary to be done, we must set about it without more ado; and not raise idle Doubts, or frame frivolous Excuses, though we are satisfied, that the performance of it would cost us our Fortunes, or our Lives. And, though this may seem a Hardship, yet it is back'd with this invincible Argument, That Vertue is our own proper Good, and ought to be dearer to us than our Bodies, or our Estates, which, in comparison of our Souls, bear but a distant Relation to us.

After this Argument, intimating, That our Duty ought to be discharged, even at the expence of the greatest Sufferings and Dangers, he introduces a God, confirming this Opinion by his own practice; and expelling that Miscreant out of his Temple, who did not relieve his Friend, but suffered him to be murdered, that he might save himself. The Story in short is thus: Two Persons upon their Journey to *Delphos*, were set upon by Thieves; While one of these was no farther solicitous than to make his own escape, the other was killed. The Survivor continued his Travels; and when he came to the Oracle, the God rejected his Address,

dress, expelled him the Temple, and reproached his Cowardice and base Desertion of his Friend, in this following manner :

*Do not, presumptuous Wretch, these Rites prophane,  
Nor with polluted Gifts our Altar stain :  
Nor prudent Fears, and threatening Fate pretend ;  
False to thy God, thy Honour, and thy Friend.  
These claim thy Blood in any danger near,  
And must condemn that base and guilty Fear,  
Which of a Coward made a treacherous Murderer. }  
Henceforth dare to be just and brave ; for know,  
He, that declines to ward it, gives the Blow.*

Now though it is plain, that this Person, would he never so fain, yet possibly he might not have been able to save his Fellow-Traveller's Life ; yet that Uncertainty by no means dispensed with him for not attempting it : His Inclination and Endeavour should not have been wanting, though that Relief he intended had been never so unsuccessful ; nay, though it had involv'd himself in the same Fate. That then, which rendred him unworthy to approach the Shrine of *Apollo*, was the Disposition of his Mind ; which prevail'd upon him to betray his Friend, and to sacrifice that Life which he ought to have defended, in tenderness to that which he ought to have exposed.

And that this is the true state of the Case, is no less evident from another Instance of two Persons, who were likewise beset with Thieves : These had got one of them at an Advantage ; and whilst the other darts at the Rogue, he miss'd his Aim, and killed his own Friend. When he came to the Oracle, he durst not approach, as having Blood upon him ; but the God justified his Action, cleared him of the Scruple he lay under, and gave him this following kind Invitation.

*Approach*

*Approach, brave Man, the Gods are Just and kind ;  
 They only hate a base and murd'rous Mind ;  
 Thy slaughter'd Friend to Us for Justice cries,  
 And his expiring Groans have pierc'd the Skies :  
 Tet not for Vengeance, but Rewards they sue ;  
 Rewards to Courage, and to Friendship due.  
 That Zeal, which Death and Danger did disdain,  
 A disobedient Weapon cannot stain:  
 Spotless thy Hand, and generous thy Design,  
 The Guilt, misguiding Fate's, the Glory's Thine.*

Now, if by the shedding this Blood, he did not only contract no Pollution at all, but was more pure, and recommended by it to the Acceptance of the Deity, because he intended well, though it was his Misfortune that the Event was so very Tragical, so exceeding contrary to his Intention ; then it is very plain, that Men's Vertues and Vices are not to be measured by Success, or by the Actions themselves, but by their innocent Intentions, honest Desires, and the Sincerity of their own Hearts.

One Caution I think necessary to be added here, for the better understanding of our Author ; which is, That we are to consider what sort of Persons these things are addressed to. Now those which I have last explained, and several of those which follow afterwards, are adapted particularly to a middle sort of Men, such as are neither utterly ignorant of Philosophy, nor absolutely Masters of it ; but have applied themselves to the study of it for some time, and made tolerable advances towards Perfection, though they have not yet attained to it. And this is sufficiently intimated to us, by the frequent repetition of those Words (*If you have any Philosophy*) upon every occasion.



## C H A P. XL.

*Consider with your self seriously, what Figure is most fit for you to make in the World; and then fix upon a Method and Rule in order hereunto; which be sure to observe nicely, both at home alone, and abroad in Company.*

## C H A P. XLI.

*Let one of your Principal Rules be Silence; and when you discourse, confine your self to such Subjects as are necessary, and express your sence in as few Words as you can. But if an Opportunity happens, as sometimes perhaps it will, that makes it seasonable for you to start the Discourse, let it not be upon any of the common Topicks of Talk, such as Plays, or Horse-Races, or Fencers, or Fashions, or Meats, or Wines, or Entertainments; which the generality of the World use to make the Subject of their Conversation. But above all things take care not to talk of other People, neither so as to censure their Conduct, nor to be lavish in their Commendation, nor to make invidious Comparisons between one and another.*

## C H A P. XLII.

*When ever you happen into Company, where you have Authority and Influence enough to do it, try to change the Discourse, and bring it to becoming Subjects: But if you are among People of another Temper, and such as will not endure Restraint or Reproof, then hold your own Tongue.*

C O M.

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE Duties, owing to a Man's self, are the next thing to be learn'd; and those he begins to treat of here, advising his Proficient, ( for to such a one he writes now, to make it his first Care, to determine with himself, what Figure he intends to make, and what Part to play upon this Theatre of the World : And when once that is done, the Next must be, so to model all his Actions, as that they may conspire together to the maintaining of that Character. And this, he tells him, must be kept constantly in view, that his whole Behaviour may be levell'd at it, both in publick and in private. By which I suppose he means, that a Man should be always consistent with himself, and his Life all of a piece; not fluctuating and uncertain, like a troubled Sea, that is ever ebbing and flowing, as the Winds and Tide change. For the Circumstances of Humane Life are no less fickle than these; and therefore we must fix our selves upon a good Bottom, that we may be able to stand the Shock, and the Variety, of them. *Socrates* is said to have attained to so great a Mastery in this Point, that the Air of his Face was always the same; Neither Pleasure and Prosperity could give him a more serene and gay Countenance; nor any of those which the World calls Calamities force him into a dejected and melancholy one; in such perfect Agreement was he constantly with himself.

Now, of all the Expedients proper for this Character, the first and most considerable, which he recommends, is a great degree of Silence. For the design of all Moral Instructions is chiefly to confine the Soul within her own proper Sphere, which is the Improvement and Contemplation of her self, and to draw her Thoughts and Affections off from the World, and the sensual Appetites and Passions, and an inordinate Concern for the Body : And no One thing contributes

more

more to the effecting of this, than Silence. The *Pythagoreans*, you see, were so sensible of this Benefit, that they imposed a *Quinquennial* Silence upon all that entered into their Discipline; and thought it the most auspicious Beginning they could possibly make. For, as the Senses, when fix'd upon External Objects, do carry the Mind abroad with them; (a plain Intimation whereof we have in that common Custom of Mens shutting their Eyes, when they would think with greater Attention;) so Speech of necessity lets loose the Mind, and sets the Thoughts to roving; and that much more indeed, than any outward and sensible Object; for there the Soul only cooperates with the Organ, and bears it Company; but here she is the first and principal Mover, and dictates what the Tongue utters. And the only effectual cure for this Rambling is to keep it at home, by holding ones Peace, and not indulging it in all its Effusions.

Not that an Universal Silence is expected from us; no, nor so high a degree of it, as that the *Pythagoreans* required: These are too exalted, and, as the World goes, unattainable Perfections. But he hath suited himself to Mens Tempers and Circumstances, and expects only such as will consist with our Infirmities, and the Affairs of the World: Therefore he advises us, either to be silent, or at least to speak no oftner, and no more than is necessary; as the answering to what is asked us, or the like. And in mentioning this Word *Necessary*, he hath given us a very compendious Hint, what Subjects we ought to converse upon; such as specially tend to the promoting of Wisdom and Vertue, the improvement of the Mind, and the necessities of the animal Life. For these being but very few, and having something of Substance and Business in them, not loose, and empty, and impertinent things, do not confound the Mind with Levity, nor fill it with wild and extravagant Ideas.

He hath also ordered us, even upon these most allowable Occasions, to be as brief as conveniently we can.

can. For it is very observable, That those who talk most, generally understand least. There is nothing disposes a Man to multitude of Words, so much as slight and superficial Notions of the Things he is talking of; he does not know what he says, and that is the Reason he does not know when to give over. But one that goes to the bottom of the Thing, and hath a clear and true Apprehension of it, will collect himself into a little Room, because he will say nothing but what is material, and directly to the Point in hand.

But if at any time an Occasion of enlarging offer it self, by which I understand Speaking, not only when you are provoked to it, but beginning some Discourse of your own Accord; Though there may be a necessity for dispensing with the latter of these Rules, and indulging your self in a larger proportion of Talk; yet be sure still to observe the former, and not go out of the Road I have directed you. Let your Subject be something of Necessity and Use; something that may advance the Love and Practice of Vertue, reform the Passions, or instruct the Understanding; such as may minister Advice to Men in Difficulties, comfort them under Afflictions, assist them in the search of the Truth, give them a reverend Sense of God, an awful Admiration of his Divine Excellencies, honourable and becoming Opinions of his Providence, and of his readiness to help and forward all those in the practice of Vertue, who are careful to implore his Aid by Prayer. But as for the common ridiculous Themes, such as Fencers, Horse-races, and the like, or Feasts, or Fashions, Cookery and Wines; Who eats and drinks, and dresses best, and such Stuff; scorn the idle Prattle: For these Subjects are apt to make a strong Impression upon the Fancy, and sometimes get within a Man's Affections before he is aware; they give a Tincture to his Appetites, and have a very unhappy Influence upon all his Conversation: And it is really no unusual thing for Peoples Manners to be formed by their Discourse.

But

But above all things, he gives us warning not to entertain our selves, and our Company with talking of other People; neither so as to call their Behaviour to Account, nor to be profuse in their Praises, nor free in making Comparisons between one Man and another, as That this Lady is handsomer than That; or this Man Braver, or Honester than That, or the like. Now there is nothing more evident, than that this Topick does, in a more than ordinary manner, divert the Soul from itself, and its own Business; for it makes Men busie, and curious, and impertinent, extremely inquisitive, and troublesome where they have nothing to do. But why should this (you'll say) do so more than any other? And what can our talking of other Men have in it, worse than the Subjects mentioned before?

To this we may reply, That the Person to whom the Advice is here directed, being one who hath made some progress in Philosophy, is not so likely to entertain himself with those trivial Matters, as with something that relates to Mankind, and their Affairs and Actions. So that it was convenient to draw him off from those things especially, which his own Inclinations would most dispose him to; and therefore he adds that Emphatical Caution, *But above all things.*

Besides, tho' it be true, That the same Affections are stirred in us by both Discourses alike, ( for we are insensibly drawn in to love and hate Things and Men by talking of them ) yet there is one peculiar Vice attends our Conversation, when we pretend to give Characters of other people; which is, That it strangely swells one with Vanity and Pride, and Contempt of others. For whoever he be, that pretends to sit in Judgment upon other Mens Conduct, he does it out of some imagined Excellence in himself, which he fancies gives him a Right to arraign his Neighbours. And besides, any mistake in our Judgments of Men is more inexcusable, and of infinitely worse Consequence,

than if we pronounce wrong in those other trifling Matters; and therefore we should be very sparing and tender in this Point.

To prove the Importance of this Advice yet more, he proceeds farther, and lays a restraint upon our Ears, as well as our Tongue. And indeed, with good Reason; for our Imaginations, and inconvenient Desires are cherished by hearing the Subjects, that minister such Thoughts, spoken of by others, as well as by speaking of them our selves. And besides, those, who give themselves these indecent Liberties, if some person of Gravity and Authority sit by, and do not check them; take advantage of his Patience, and grow perfectly careless; they then think they have a privilege of saying what they will, and no Shame, nor Sense of Decency hath any longer power upon them. Therefore he directs us, to take all the prudent Methods we can, of putting a stop to such Discourse, and turning it to some other more manly and becoming Topick. But, because this is not to be done at all times, nor will every Company bear it; therefore (says he) if you are fallen in among Men of ill Tempers, no Breeding, or vicious Conversation, (for these are the persons he calls, people of another Kidney) yet at least discountenance them by your Silence; and preserve your self from Infection, by withdrawing from their Discourse into your own Breast.

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### C H A P. XLIII.

*Laugh but upon few Occasions; and when you do,  
let it not be much, nor loud.*

C O M-

## C O M M E N T.

**A**fter the former General Precept of an even Temper, and Uniform Behaviour, to which, he tells his Proficient in Philosophy, nothing will more effectually conduce, than a prudent Frugality in Discourse; the next restraint he puts, is upon the Excesses of Mirth, which are commonly expressed by Laughter: and perhaps by this of Joy, he might design, that we should understand him to extend his Rules to the contrary Extream of Grief too. Now Laughter is a sort of Evacuation, which the Mind gives it self; a kind of Vent, which it finds for Joy, when it is full and runs over. The very nature and manner of it seems to speak thus much. The swelling of the Lungs, the Interruptions of Breath, and Reverberations of the Air, and that cackling noise, which resembles the purling of Waters. All these betray an extraordinary Vehemence, and Emotion, in the Soul and Body both; and confess plainly, That neither of them are then in that sedate and steady Temper, which Nature and Reason find most agreeable. The same Inconveniences follow upon the other Extream. For immoderate Sorrow, and indulged Tears give as great a shock to a Man's Judgment, and Consistence with himself; which indeed is never to be preserved, but by just measures, and a constant moderation in every thing.

For this Reason it is, that he condemns the laughing upon every occasion, as an Argument of insufferable Levity. But if there happens any thing which may justly provoke Laughter, as we are not absolutely to decline it, for fear we be suspected to want this property of Humane Nature, and appear unreasonably sour and morose, yet at least it must be allowed, That there are very few things in Conversation which will



justifie much of it. A man that is eternally upon the Giggle, shews a mighty defect of Judgment, and that every little occasion of mirth is master of his Temper, when it thus blows him up into excessive Joy. For this reason it ought not to be frequent, nor to continue long at a time, for so I understand his forbidding it to be much; nor should it be noisy, and violent, and convulsive; but shew the Evenness and Government of the Mind, by being modest, and scarce exceeding a Smile, which moves the Lips a little, yet so as to make no great alteration in the Face.

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### C H A P. XLIV.

*If it be possible, avoid Swearing altogether; but if you cannot do that absolutely, yet be sure to decline it as much as you can.*

### C O M M E N T.

**T**HE First place in this Catalogue of Duties which respects our selves, was due to the restraining those Eruptions and Vehemencies of Passion, which give a disturbance to the Quiet of our Minds, and render our Behaviour Irregular and Inconsistent. The next he assigns to that, wherein the Honour of God is concerned.

For the very Nature of an Oath consists in this, That it invokes Almighty God as a Witness, and introduces him as a Mediator, and a Bondsman, to undertake for our Honesty and Truth. Now to make bold with God, upon every trivial Occasion, (and few of the Affairs of Mankind are any better) is to take a very unbecoming Freedom, and such as argues  
great

great want of Reverence for so tremendous a Majesty. Respect and Duty then ought to make us decline an Oath, and so, as if we can possibly help it, never to bind our Souls with so Sacred an Engagement at all. And a man, that is duly cautious, and tender in these matters, would rather undergo some Trouble, or pay some Forfeiture, than allow himself the Liberty of swearing. But if there be any urgent and unavoidable Necessity for doing it, as if that Testimony of my Truth be required to rescue my Friend, or my Relation, from the Injuries of an Oppressor, or a False Accuser; or if my Country, and the Peace of it command this Assurance of my Fidelity; in such Cases, and other such like, we may take an Oath indeed; but then we must be sure not to prostitute our Consciences. For, when once we have brought our selves under so solemn an Obligation, and engaged God as a Witness and a Party in it, no Consideration must ever prevail with us to be unfaithful to our Promise, or untrue in our Assertions.

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#### C H A P. XLV.

*Decline all Publick Entertainments, and mixed Companies; but if any extraordinary occasion call you to them, keep a strict Guard upon your self, lest you be infected with rude and vulgar Conversation: For know, that though a Man be never so clear himself, yet, by frequenting Company that are tainted, he will of necessity contract some Pollution from them.*

## C O M M E N T.

THE former Chapter was intended to give us a due and awful regard to God, and to check those Liberties, which light thoughts of his Majesty are apt to encourage in us. His next design is, to chain up that many headed Monster, *Desire*; and, in order hereunto, he prescribes Rules, and sets Bounds to several instances of it, beginning with those which are most necessary for the sustenance of Life; and so proceeding to others, that make Provision for the Body, till at last he instances in those which Nature is most prone to.

And there was good reason here to give a particular Advertisement concerning Feasts and large Companies, in regard there is so mighty a difference observable between those of Philosophers, and those of common Men. The Eating and Drinking part, and all the Jollity, which is the End and Business of most Invitations, Men of Sense have always look'd upon as the least part of a Feast: And Their Meetings have been designed only for Opportunities to improve one another by mutual Conference, wise Discourses, assiduous Enquiry into the Truth, and a free Communication of each others Studies and Opinions: This is exceeding plain, to their immortal Honour, from those admirable Pieces of *Plato*, and *Xenophon*, and *Plutarch*, and Others, that go by the Name of their *Symposia*, and are an account of the Discourse that passed, when Friends met to eat and drink together. But the Entertainments of the greatest part of the World propose nothing to themselves, but Luxury and Excess, and the gratifying Men's Palates and sensual Appetites: They are not the Entertainment of a Man, but the Cramming and Gorging of a Brute; and most justly fall under the Reproach of an old Observation: *The Table that gives us Meat without Discourse, is not so properly a Table as a Manger.*

A good Man therefore will be careful how he mingles himself in such Meetings, and decline them as much as is possible. But if any extraordinary occasion draw him abroad, such as a Solemn Festival, the Invitation of a Parent, a common Meeting of Friends, or Relations, or Civility and Complaisance, where the thing cannot in good Manners be refused; then the next care is, That we keep a strict guard upon our selves; That we awaken our Reason, and call up all our Powers, that they watch the Motions of the Mind, and keep her under a severe Confinement, for fear she ramble abroad, and indulge her self in the Diversions of the Company, and by degrees degenerate into their Follies. For there is a strange Contagion in Vice, and no Disease conveys it self more insensibly, or more fatally, than sensual and brutish Inclinations do. Whoever therefore allows himself in the Conversation of Persons addicted to them, and grows accustomed to their Vices, (for that I take to be the meaning of frequenting them) will soon contract their Pollutions; his own Innocence and Purity will not be able to secure him. In these cases, the least touch leaves a Tincture behind it. And this indeed is the proper Notion of Pollution, the soiling of a clean thing with an unclean, and thereby casting a Blemish and Stain upon it.

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#### C H A P. XLVI.

*Let Use and Necessity be the Rule of all the Provisions you make for the Body. Chuse your Meat and Drink, Apparel, House, and Retinue of such Kinds, and in such Proportions, as will most conduce to these Purposes. But as for all beyond this, which ministers to Vanity or Luxury, retrench and despise it.*

C O M-

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE necessary Supports and Conveniences of the Body, must first be acquired, and then made use of; but *Epictetus* hath inverted this Order; for he gives us Directions for the Use of them here, and reserves the Procuring of them to be treated of hereafter.

It were a thing perhaps much to be wished, and would make greatly for the Honour of Humane Nature, that so noble a Being, as the Rational Soul, could be independent, and not stand in need of these outward Conveniences. But however, whatever Glories belong to that Soul, considered in it self; yet its own Immortality will not suffice in this indigent and precarious state, where it is joined to a mortal and corruptible Body, and acts in and by it. But still, though this Consideration exposes it to some wants; yet it shews us withal, That those Wants are not many: For, the Body being the Instrument of the Soul, can need no more than just so much as will qualifie it for service and action; this is the true measure of our Expences upon it, and all beyond, favours of Luxury and Extravagance. When the Carpenter chuses an Axe, and sees afterwards that it be kept in good order, he concerns himself no farther, than to consider the Size, and the Shape, and the Sharpness of the Edge: He is not so sollicitous to have the Head gilded, nor the Handle studded with Pearl or Diamonds; and the reason is, because such costly Ornaments would not only be superfluous, but prejudicial; they would be extremely ridiculous and singular too, and they would be a hindrance to his Tools, and render them less fit for the Uses they were designed to serve. Just thus ought we to behave our selves to this Body of ours, this Instrument of our Soul; being concerned our selves for no other Supplies, but such as may contribute to the making it of constant use to us.

That

That which should determine our Choice in Meats and Drinks, should be the Consideration, which is most natural, and the most ready at hand; for those that are so, are generally the most simple, most easie of digestion, and most wholesome: For we are to remember, that the Animal Life in us must be supported; but, that Nature hath not made Varieties and (*Quelques Choses*) necessary to this purpose. And therefore we may very well dispense with the Niceties of the Kitchen and Preserving-Room, and all the Arts of studied Luxury; for the only Business we have to do, is, to repair the Decays of a Body that is perpetually wasting; and that this may be done at a much easier rate, is very plain, from the Examples of those whom necessitous Circumstances compel to a plain and coarse Diet; who yet generally have more Strength, and better Health, than those that indulge their Palates and fare sumptuously. This we shall soon be convinced of, if we do but compare Country-men with Courtiers, Servants with their Masters, and, in general, poor People with rich. For Superfluities and dainty Meats do but oppress Nature; they are treacherous Delights, and carry a kind of secret Poison in them. Hence it is, that we see the Constitutions of Men that live deliciously, so miserably broken; and instead of good Nourishment, all their Food turns into Corruption and ill Humours, Catarrhs and Vapours, and all the wretched Consequences of weak Stomachs, and indigested Fumes.

The Health therefore of the Body, and the preserving it in a vigorous and active state, should prescribe to us, both for the kind and the quantity of our Diet. Otherwise we shall be but the worse for the Care and Expence we are at about it; and, by a very impertinent and mistaken Tenderneſs, render this Instrument capable of doing the Soul Service, and perhaps too, quite break or wear it out the faster.

Now

Now it is a very great happiness to have been brought up sparingly, and used to a plain Diet from one's Cradle; for by this means there will be no strife between Nature and Appetite; but that, which is most for the Benefit of the Body, will be likewise most agreeable to the Palate; And a Man lies under no Temptation of destroying the one, for the sake of gratifying the other.

The same Rule ought to take place in our Apparel too; in which *Socrates* gave himself so little trouble, that we are told he wore the same Clothes both in Winter and Summer. Now I can allow a Man to indulge himself to degrees of Tenderness, which would make him seem a perfect *Epicure* in comparison of *Socrates*; and yet I should think he might content himself too, with wearing such Linen and Wollen as our own Country affords, and to change these for warmth or coolness, as the Seasons of the Year shall make it most easie and convenient for him. But for foreign Vanities, and fantastick Dresses, such as puts us upon fishing all the East and Western Rivers for Pearl, and felling whole Forests for Furrs and Ermins, and rising the *India's* for Silks, and exchanging substantial Gold and Silver for the Cobwebs of Worms; this can be nothing else but Foppery and Nonsense, the marks of a profligate Mind, and the scandal of an Age abandoned to Luxury and Madness.

So again for our Houses. *Crates* is said to have satisfied himself with a Tub, though at the same time he had a very fine Wife, which would have given him a fair pretence for a more spacious Dwelling. This is a piece of mortification not required at our hands; and *Epictetus* is well contented, we should have a House, and all Conveniences about it, provided that both the Proportion and the Finishing be contrived for Use, and not for Pomp and Excess. It is fit, there should be a decent apartment for the Men,



Men, and another for the Females of the Family ; tho' indeed these distinct Apartments are not absolutely necessary neither. But to talk of thirty or forty Lodging-Rooms, of inlaid Floors, and Marble Hearths, of Carvings, and Paintings, and Fret-work, and different Apartments suited to the several Months of the Year ; this is not to supply our Necessity, but to gratifie our Curiosity and Pride. And it hath this farther Inconvenience in it, That a Man used to such Things, is condemned to a perpetual uneasiness, whenever his own Occasions call him to a Place where he cannot be equally accommodated ; or when the change of his Fortunes reduces him to a necessity of parting with those Conveniences, which, at the Expence of so much Labour and Treasure, he hath provided for himself. I might add too, and that very seasonably, That a Man who hath used himself to take delight in these things, cannot escape the folly and misery of placing his Happiness in them, and so utterly neglect the Improvement of his own Mind, and forget the true Felicity of humane Nature. And, if by any Misfortune (as indeed there are a great many that may contribute to it) he lose these Enjoyments, he must consequently be exposed to all the Excesses of Passion, and an impotent Mind, and imagine himself wretched to the very last degree : Though in truth, to any one that esteems things rightly, it will appear, that he was much more unhappy, and had more just occasions of lamenting his own Condition, when in the midst of his so-much-admired Gaiety and Splendour.

The number of our Retinue, and use of our Servants, are subject to the same Limitations ; the occasion we have for them, and the proportion of our Estates. For Servants should be always kept so as to have enough of that which is necessary and convenient for them ; and yet be always in Employment too : So that we must cut the middle way between  
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the two Extreame, Idleness and Indulgence on the one hand, and Barbarity and Slavery on the other. But as for vast Crowds of Pages and Foot-men, such as have nothing to do but to make way in the Streets, or to make a great appearance, or to run before a Chair, or hang behind a Coach; the Masters would do well to consider, that so many Attendants are, in plain terms, but so many Keepers. And sure there cannot be a greater slavery, than to have so many Eyes continually upon you; to have every Motion watched, every Discourse over-heard, no freedom or privacy left, no retirement safe from their Observation; and, in a word, nothing done or said without their Knowledge, and saucy Censures upon It and You. But, besides the insupportable Inconvenience of them in one's own Family, they are often very troublesome and injurious to others, knavish and vexatious to Tradesmen, shirking out of Markets and Shops, rude and insolent to their Betters, guilty of a thousand Violences and Affronts; and all this, upon a Confidence of their own Strength, that their Master's Authority will protect them, or their Fellow-Servants stand by them in their Rogueries, and be able to bear them out against all opposition. By these wicked Qualities, and their abominable Idleness, they grow lewd and debauched, and are the worst Enemies commonly that their Masters have. Who, all the while, for the State of keeping these Rake-hells about them, are forced to break their own rest, and undergo many Hardships, and submit to the mean Arts of Flattery, and making their Court, and become Slaves their own selves, and which is worst of all, abandon the Rules of Wisdom and Vertue. But if Men will be so fond of a profligate Life, the matter is not great if they pay dear for their Vanity; and therefore let them go on, till Repentance makes them wiser.

As for the Philosopher, who conforms himself to *Epictetus* his Rules, a very moderate Attendance will serve

serve his turn. For his Concerns with the World are not like to be very great, and he will not think himself too good to do all that he can in his own Person, without being troublesome to others. So that, except in cases of Sicknels, or some Businels, which he alone cannot possibly dispatch, or Retirement from the Affairs of the World, to gain leisure for attending to some better Employment, he will have very little occasion for a Servant. Thus *Epictetus* is said to have lived a long time all alone, till at last he was forced to hire a Nurse to bring up a Child of a poor Friend's; whose extream Necessity had made him resolved to drop the poor Infant, if *Epictetus* in Charity had not taken it home, and maintained it.

After having made particular mention of the Necessaries of Humane Life, he exhorts in general to retrench all Superfluities; reducing whatever is so to these two Heads, Luxury and Vanity. For indeed, whenever we exceed the Bounds of Moderation in any of our Expences, one of these two is always the cause of it. And we are told, that the Persons of Immortal Renown for their Wisdom and Vertue heretofore, were so extreamly nice in this Point, and so careful not to indulge themselves in any thing but what was absolutely needful: That *Diogenes*, after having used a long time to carry a Wooden-Dish in his Pocket to drink Water in, passed by one Day, and saw a poor Fellow taking up Water in the Palms of his Hands, and so drinking it: Whereupon he flung away his Dish immediately into the River, and said, he had now no farther occasion for it, since it only served for a Use which his Hands could as well supply without it.

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## C H A P. XLVII.

*Abstain from Familiarities with Women before Marriage, as much as possibly you can; at least, if you indulge your self in any Liberties of this kind, be sure to wrong no Man's Bed, nor transgress any Law. But, how perfect soever your own Chastity may be, let not the Conceit of this make you troublesome to others that are more frail: And be not too lavish either in reproving their Failings, nor in Commendation of your own Vertue.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**Bstinence from all kind of Bodily Pleasure hath this peculiar good Effect, that it confirms and invigorates the Rational Soul, and, by the Experience of Conquests gained by single Acts, encourages it to exert it self in new Attempts, upon a Confidence that it is able to master the brutish and rebellious Appetites. And the Disorders of those Appetites are to be subdued Two ways; by wasting the Habits of them, and keeping from frequent Repetitions of their several Acts; and by using them to submit to the Discipline of Reason. But the Vertue of Continence in the Pleasures of the Bed, which is a Species of the former, is of so much greater Benefit to the Soul, and deserves to be more highly esteemed, in proportion as the Temptation is stronger, and the Conquest more difficult and noble than the rest.

Now, although in this Case Reason be informed and directed by Doctrines of Prudence and Morality, and also by positive Laws, excellently fitted for this purpose;

purpose; and the Impetuous Sallies of the brutish Inclinations are check'd, and held in by this means; yet many Instances make it plain, That there is another Method of dealing with them. The Appetites, which lead us to all those Enjoyments that Sense is most fond of, notwithstanding they are natural to us, and very vehement in their Operations, may, by good Management and Custom, be reduced, and vanquished by mild and gentle ways, and without any great Violence committed upon Humane Nature. Thus we see, Persons, that have habituated themselves to Fasting and Abstemiousness, find no disturbance at all from the craving of their Appetites, but quite contrary feel themselves oppress'd and indisposed, if they allow themselves to eat, either above their usual Quantity, or before their usual hour. And thus we find too, that Mens Ambition for the Olympick Crown, restrains all their Inclinations of another kind, while they are dieting for the Exercises; though Reason and common Sense will tell us, That the unreasonable quantity of Meat, which they are forced to take to nourish and strengthen them at such times, must needs raise those Desires, and render the Solicitations of them more importunate than otherwise they would be. And we cannot with any good Grace call that Invincible, which for the sake of a Sprig of Laurel is vanquish'd every Day. So also both Custom and Positive Law have utterly forbidden, That very near Relations should come together; and these Person's Inclinations, though infused into them by Nature, yet are almost incapable of being moved towards one another, notwithstanding any the most engaging Charms of either Party; and whenever they are so, we look upon it as an extreme Unhappiness, and particular Judgment. And the Consequence of this I take to be, That the Passion, which



can very hardly be provoked in one case, might with good Care be suppress'd in another.

Now that strict Chastity which is here required before Marriage, is very reasonable and just upon many Accounts; but it is particularly so upon this, That the Man may be upon equal Terms with his Wife, and give her the Satisfaction of the same unblemished Vertue in his own Person, which he expects to meet with in hers. But (says he) if some Liberties must be taken, yet keep at least within the \* Compass which the Law allows: For all beyond that is impious and abominable, or else the Law would not have made a Difference, and fenced it in. Besides, it argues great Impotence, and an ungovernable mind, to lay all this in common, and is of ill Example, and pestilent Consequence; for it hardens a Man's self, and emboldens others to slight not only this, but all Laws whatsoever, when once the Authority that gave them Sanction is violated.

*But how perfect soever your own Chastity may be, let not (says he) the Conceit of this make you troublesome to others that have the Misfortune of being more frail. And be not too lavish, either in reproving their Failings, or in commending your own Vertue.* This is very prudent and seasonable Advice; for such Reproaches cannot but be very harsh and grating, from Persons with whom we ordinarily converse; since we see how tenderly Humane Nature can bear Reproof, and that so very few can endure to be chidden, even by those who have a Right to do it, by Vertue of their Post and Authority. Now one great Reason, why even the softest Rebukes are generally so very ill relented,

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\* This is to be understood of the Heathen Countries only, where Simple Fornication was not prohibited by any Humane Constitution; but the Christian have reformed that Abuse.

I take to be this; That so long as no Body tells us of our Faults, we please our selves with an Opinion, that they are concealed from all the World, and by degrees come to think nothing a Fault that is not known. And this again proceeds from a base principle of Hypocrisie and Ostentation: which makes the Opinion of the World a Rule for our own Judgment of our selves; and if we can but approve our selves to other Men, we are not much concerned whether we can do it or no, to the Truth; that is, to God, and to our own Consciences.

But if the Person that reproves us, do not only take off the Veil from us, but put it upon himself; and while he is exposing our Faults, exalt and proclaim his own Vertues, this aggravates the provocation yet more: For at this rate he insults over us like a Conqueror, and upbraids our Weaknesses, and makes the Comparison, only that we may look a great deal less, and serve as Foils for his Merit. And what can be more unequal than this, that our Competitor should be our Judge?

Besides, such haughty Rebukes, and invidious Comparisons, are not only injurious to the person designed to be lessened by them, but even to the Author himself. For they swell his Mind with Pride, and confirm him in his Insolence and Vain-glory; they corrupt all his Reproofs, and incline him to correct other mens Miscarriages, not so much out of any desire to reform them, as to raise his own Reputation by sinking that of others. And he who hath once discovered such base indirect Designs, must never expect to have his Reproofs heard with any Patience, or to work any Good by them: For he gives a man the fairest Opportunity in the World to excuse his Folly, by laying hold on the odious Comparison. And if he can but return this Answer, *That less is expected from him, He for his part is no Philosopher; and therefore his*

*Failings are no great Matters, he thinks his Reprover effectually silenced, and himself sufficiently vindicated.*

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## C H A P. XLVIII.

*If you happen to be told at any time, That another Person hath spoken ill of you, never trouble your self to confute the Report, or excuse the thing ; but rather put all up with this Reply ; That you have several other Faults besides that, and if he had known you more, he would have spoken worse.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**His seems directed more particularly against Anger, a Passion that never feels it self more easie to be provoked, than upon the News of our being slandered and misrepresented. But besides, it is likewise a Check to Ambition and Vain-glory, The Two great Fomenters of that Passion.

But it may very well seem strange, that he should advise us here not to justify our selves, and make a Man the Publisher of his own Follies and Misfortunes, by so frank an Acknowledgment, That he hath several other Faults besides that particular one which is laid to his Charge. You may call this Moderation and Temper, but it seems to be a very great Extreme, and more Affectation than Evenness of Spirit.

To this Objection we may say, That the Direction is agreeable enough to the main design of the Author in this place ; which is, To wean the Soul from

from what she is most fond of, to draw her off from the World, and all that can engage her Affections there, and to make the Improvement of the Mind, and the Testimony of ones own Breast, the sole End and Business of our Lives. Now when a man is extremely solicitous to be cleared, and cannot rest satisfied in the Approbation of his own Conscience, and throw himself upon an Appeal to the Judgment of God, to whom all hearts are open, and every action known; this man, I say, plainly shews a strong desire to recommend himself to the good Opinion of the World. And the Effect of such a Desire will be, That if he can impose upon the World with false Pretences, he will be satisfied with the deceitful Appearance of Vertue too, and perswade himself of his Innocence; because those Judges, to whose Sentence he refers his Actions, think him so, and are able to urge nothing to the contrary. But now; when a man is got above the Censure of the World, and scorns to make that a Rule for his Behaviour, he is under no Temptation of partiality to himself, but sees his own Faults, and stands condemned by the Testimony of his own mind against him.

Now the accusing ones own self, and owning other Faults, besides what the World lays to our Charge, strikes at the very Root of Ostentation and Vain-glory. And indeed it is necessary something should do so, for this is a prevailing Passion, rivetted close into the Soul, so intricately fastned and intangled there, that it fixes it self while we endeavour to pluck it up; and even those Actions wherein we industriously avoid Vain-glory, are often strongly tinged with, and chiefly owing to it.

It hath also one considerable advantage above other Passions; which is, That its Viciousness and Deformity lies concealed longer than any else, and deceives us with a Colour of Vertue, because it is by

Vertuous Actions only that we hope for Reputation; not considering in the mean while, That this very courting of Applause sullies the most commendable Actions, and robs them of all pretension to Vertue, because we do not make that our principal End, nor choose the Good for its own sake, but for the Credit and Honour it will derive upon us. For it is plain, That the Mark we aim at is Glory and Commendation, and the Good we apply our selves to, is not the Effect of Choice but Necessity; and thus many of us would not be Just (for instance) but only that there is no way to get the good Opinion of the World without it.

There is this to be said farther in its excuse, That this Passion seems to be extremely useful for the qualifying of several others. For we are content to undergo many sharp Conflicts with our selves, and deny several Inclinations and Enjoyments, upon this account; And, as it is a restraint to our Vices so is it likewise a powerful Incentive and Spur to Vertue; it puts us upon engaging in many difficult Encounters, reconciles us to Austerities and Mortifications, and imposes Tasks, which, though performed with great Alacrity upon this account, would otherwise seem severe and insupportable Punishments.

For this Reason Ambition and Desire of Applause is very significantly termed the inmost Garment of the Soul; as that which sticks closest to it of all Passions whatsoever; because, when we have stript our selves of the rest, yet this is still retained; And in truth the rest, are many times laid aside for the sake of this. At least they appear to be so; for to speak strictly, this is all but Appearance, and Hypocrisie; nor does this Passion in reality make the Soul abandon Vice; for it only puts a Restraint upon the outward act, without any effectual Reformation of the mind or correcting the inward motions to Wickedness.

Thus

Thus we find, that those very Persons, who, to preserve their Reputation, abstain from gross and scandalous Lewdness, do yet without any remorse indulge themselves in unseen Liberties, and loose Imaginations. So that, upon the whole matter, men are not one whit the better, but the worse upon this account; for there are not any vicious Desires reclaimed by it; and the abstaining from the open Gratification of those Desires blows them up with a false Opinion of Vertue, and adds to their Vanity ten times more.

It seems, I confess, capable of doing some Service to young men, whose Passions ride high; by curbing the Exorbitancies, which Youth, through the Heat and Rashness of that Age, is so exceeding apt to fly out into; but when those importunate Solicitations wear off, and men grow into cooler Reason, no Quality of the mind can be more dangerous and destructive. For it absolutely ruins all Vertue, by seducing the Soul to base Principles. It makes the Opinion of the World the chief end of Action, and lays more stress upon recommending ones self to Others, than upon the Satisfaction and Testimony of his own Conscience; it proposes Good to us, as eligible, not for any Intrinsic Excellence of its own, but for the Honour and Fame consequent to the doing of it: So that in short we never really choose Good; not Good I mean, considered as such, because we do not choose it for its own sake.

Nor is this only a dangerous Vice, but a most extravagantly ridiculous one too, and such as exposes all, that are tainted with it, to one most absurd and inconsistent Folly. For men of this Temper commonly value themselves, and despise others extremely; and yet at the same time do they court, and flatter, and fear them, and pin all their Happiness,

and all their Expectation, upon these very Wretches whom they think so despicable.

Now nothing can cure this extravagant and slavish Passion, so effectually as Moderation; an evenness of Mind, and a frank acknowledgment of our own Faults and Failings. And yet even this hath some hazard in it too; for affected Humility is the greatest Pride, and, without due Caution, and prudent Care, we shall fall into the very danger we would avoid, and become Vain-glorious even in the Accusations of our selves. Many men know, that to lessen themselves in their own Expressions, is to bespeak the Commendation of others by a sly and a surer way. But this Temper recommended by *Epictetus* must be sincere, free from underhand Trickings, and indirect Ends. And indeed he recommends it upon very good Grounds. For it is easie to perceive, That, if Fate should so order the matter, as that our Vertues and Advantages should be known to our selves alone; and our Follies and Defects published to all the World, there would presently be an end of all Vain-glory: and whatever Good we do, we should be invited to it for its own sake, when there could be no Prospect of Applause to tempt us.



## C H A P. XLIX.

*It is by no means convenient that you should frequent the Theatres ; but if any occasion happen to call you thither, discover no concern but for your self alone. That is, do not wish the Success any other than it is, or that the Victory should fall on any Person, except him that gains it. For this will keep your Mind free and disengaged. Let your Behaviour there be easie and sedate, not betraying any Transport of the Mind, by Shouting or loud Laughter, or long and vehement Emotions. So again, when the Play is over, do not discourse much of what you saw there, nor enlarge upon things for which you are never the better : For if you do, this plainly implies, that the Entertainment hath got within you, and that you admired, and were highly pleased with it.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE sensual and brutish Appetites, are not confined to such Objects only, as our Touch and Taste are employed in, but extend themselves likewise to those that entertain our Sight and our Hearing : And what sort of Behaviour and Disposition will become us with respect to these, he tells us here, by laying down this Rule : *That it is by no means necessary or convenient to frequent the Publick Theatres.* He might have said indeed, That it is absolutely necessary, and highly expedient, not to frequent them ; for in truth such Places leave a strong Infection, and make the whole Life of those  
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that use them to become Theatrical, all Show and Formality.

But there may sometimes an occasion fall out, in which a Man cannot, without injury to himself or his Character, refuse appearing there ; as, either upon some Publick Festival, which these Entertainments are design'd to Honour, and make more solemn ; or in compliance with the Customs of the World ; or at the request of Friends ; ( for it looks sour and morose to be singular, and decline the received Practices of Mankind ; ) or we may be invited thither, only to make an Experiment upon our own selves, as having a mind to be satisfied, what Improvements we have made, and how differently we are affected with these matters at different times. If therefore any of these, or any other reasonable Cause, bring us to the Theatre, we must be sure to call up all our Vigilance, to collect our selves, and not let our Passions get loose ; but be solicitous only for the Peace and Evenness of our own Mind, and perfectly indifferent where the Success of the Combat lights : For we are to remember, that all these are things foreign, and without us, and consequently such as our Desires and Aversions ought by no means to fasten upon.

This inward Tranquility is what *Epictetus* expects our outward Air and Behaviour should shew : That our Mien and Countenance be settled and composed, yet easie and good-natured too, such as may express Gravity without Sullenness, and Mirth without Levity : Not making our selves troublesome and ridiculous, either by loud Acclamations and Applauses at what is well performed, or by bursting out into loud and excessive Laughter at any comical Passages that come before us ; but commending the one sort with Judgment and Moderation, and approving the other with a silent Smile.

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When the Sight is over, there is a farther care to be taken, *Not to discourse largely upon any thing we have been entertained with there*; as considering, that these matters contribute not at all to the making a Man wiser or better. And since they are in no degree instructive, or reforming, a Man ought not to think them worthy to be the subject of his Discourse. Now indeed *Epictetus* his Caution here, of not discoursing much upon Things for which we are never the better, may bear something different Interpretations: For he may either intend it of all Things relating to these Publick Entertainments, the Successes of the Gladiators, and every Event which is there presented to us; and that a Man cannot possibly be edified by talking upon such Subjects as these: or else he may only cut off some particular parts of our Discourse upon these Subjects, and advise us, when we do make them the matter of our Talk, that we should say no more upon these occasions, than what may some way conduce to the correcting of Manners, and making us wiser. And such Topicks particularly are those, that make Observations upon Men's Behaviour, and condemn all such indecent and irregular Gestures, as plainly discover that the Mind is not in due temper. But to run out, and enlarge extravagantly, upon what hath passed, is a manifest Indication, that our Minds were too much affected with it; and that it appeared to be great, and just matter of admiration to us. All which is very unworthy a Philosopher, and a Defect peculiar to little and vulgar Souls.

## C H A P. L.

*Be not fond of going to every body's Rehearsals; but when you do, be sure to preserve a grave and sedate Temper; but do not run into the other Extream neither, of rude and unmannerly Moroseness.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE next thing he gives Direction in, is, those Publick Rehearsals, which the Pretenders to Oratory and Poetry used to make, meerly for Ostentation, and to proclaim their own Eloquence. The Subjects of these Rehearsals were various; sometimes a Panegyrick upon some great Prince, or General, or Statesman; sometimes they were Politick Harangues; sometimes a fine Description of a City, or Country; sometimes the discussing a point of Law, or the like. Now such as these, which propose nothing farther to themselves but Vanity and Ostentation, and have no concern with Vertue, or any thing that is properly ours; he advises us not to be forward in frequenting, nor indeed ever to attend them at all, without some good Reason that may justify our coming to them. For it may very often happen, that this will be expected from you, either as a Testimony of your Friendship to the Composer, or a Mark of Respect due to the Great Man, who is his Theme; or upon some other account, which Civility and Good-Breeding may make necessary. And these Compliances are sometimes of great Use, and have good Effect, to take off the edge of that Envy and Spight, with which all People are naturally persecuted, who recede from the common way of living, and do not do as the World does.

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Since then you must in all likelihood be there sometimes, the next point to be gained is a due and decent management of your self upon these occasions. And this will best be done by a grave and composed Temper; yet not so severe as to be rude and troublesome. Your Gravity must shew it self in commending Things as they deserve, so as neither to be unseasonable, nor immoderate and lavish in your Praise. Your composed Temper will keep you orderly and quiet; it will prevent all irregular Motion and loud Applause, and impertinent Interruptions; and continue the same modest, decent Air, without those sudden and vehement alterations, both in Body, and Mind, and Mien, which are but too frequent in such cases. Your Easiness must be preserved too all this while, that you may avoid the Indecency of being over-thoughtful, and seeming not to attend. By this also you will be kept from a sullen and affected Silence; and, when Things are well said, will not grudge them their due Commendation. It will prevent all peevish Censures and malicious Criticisms, and that unbred roughness, which calls out to the Poet, and reproaches him with Falshood and Flattery, or a dull Thought, or flat and improper Expressions. In short, the Easiness and Complacency expected from you, will consist in such Candour and Good-nature, as seems pleased with the Eloquence of the Rehearser, and the Merit of the Person commended, and can congratulate both freely when they deserve it, without any mixture of Envy or Detraction.

## C H A P. LI.

*When you are engaged in Business with any Person, but especially if it be a Man of Quality and Power, consider with your self, how Socrates and Zeno would have behaved themselves upon this occasion, and then you will never be at a loss, how to manage your Affair with decency, and to advantage.*

## C O M M E N T.

**P**hilosophical Persons make their own Improvement the main Business of their Lives, and consequently meddle not with any but themselves; so that they are very seldom troubled with attendance and application to Great Men. Before Persons so unpractised therefore, he sets *Socrates* and *Zeno* for Patterns, that by taking our measures from their Vertues and Demeanour, we may be able to manage so nice a point of humane Conversation; and consider, that these excellent Persons when they address'd to Authority and Greatness, did not put on a stiff Formality and dissembled Respect; but shewed a true and genuine Nobleness of Soul, agreeable to the Tenour of their whole Lives; and this too such, as was the Result of Philosophy and Prudence, and not the Effect of Insolence and Vanity: That this kept them in a due Moderation and Decorum; between a submissive Cringing, and a sawcy Pertness.

The same temper will prevent any such mean and abject Awe for the Eminence of Men's Station, as should betray us into Flattery, and prevail with us to complement their Failings, and commend their Vices; and yet it will not suffer us to presume upon

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our own Authority and Wisdom neither; or so far to forget Decency and Good-Manners, as to reproach and rip up those Vices in rude and opprobrious Language. It teaches us the softest and most gentle methods of Reproof; and advises, first, to allow what they have done well, its due Praises, and so to make way for just and necessary Rebukes. Thus sweetening the less-palatable part of our Discourse, with what we know hath an agreeable relish, as Physicians wrap up bitter Pills in Honey, to make them go down the more glibly. And when we must at last proceed to this most ungrateful-good Office, it will become us, not to be too rigorous Observers, nor too severe Interpreters of their Actions, as if their Deformities were any Diversion to us, or we took a malicious Joy in finding fault: But to demonstrate, by all our Carriage, That Reformation is our only End; and to pursue this with a most affectionate Zeal, expressing great Tenderness, and much Trouble and Concern, that the Lustre of their good Actions should be thus sullied and eclipsed, by these Failings, and Blemishes, and rebellious Passions.

There is also another Topick applicable to this purpose, which I do not doubt but *Socrates* and *Zeno* managed with marvellous dexterity and success: Which was, To convince People of Condition, what a world of Inconveniences and Troubles Greatness was ever incumbred with; and, that the only desirable thing in it, is the Power and Opportunities of doing good, and making that good diffusive and effectual, above Men of a meaner Capacity. So that those, who in such a Post abandoned themselves to Vice, and neglected to improve this advantage, retain'd the bitter part, and threw away all the sweet; were oppress'd with the Miseries and the burdensome Cares of Riches and Honour, and lost all the Comfort and all the Happiness of them.

But



But all this while it must be remembred, that *Socrates* and *Zeno* are proposd to us as Patterns, because it is convenient, that we should fix our Eyes upon the noblest and most perfect Examples, and, so far as we can, aspire by degrees to their Perfections; but still we must in matters of Practice be content to keep to our own Model, and shall acquit our selves very well, if our Actions bear proportion to our Condition and Character. Nor can it be expected, that a young Proficient in Philosophy, and one, whom *Epictetus* supposes still to stand in need of his Instruction, should be able, in his Behaviour and Conversation, to proceed just as *Socrates* and *Zeno* did. The pretending to personate these Great Men in all things, would not be Imitation, but Mimickry; and fit so ill upon such a one, as to make him and what he did ridiculous. How vain an attempt this would prove, we need no other Argument, than that account given of *Zeno* by *Antigonus*, the Successor of *Alexander* in *Syria*; who, tho' he had conversed with several Philosophers, yet declared, That he never could so far command himself in Company with *Zeno*, as to conquer his Disorder and Confusion; and, That the very Presence of that Man did ( what no other could do ) damp him with an unusual Awe and Concern.

And thus *Epictetus* takes occasion, from directing us what Methods are proper to be used in address to, and conference with, Men in eminent Dignity, to descend to inferiour Conditions, and give Rules for Conversation in general.

## CHAP. LII.

*When your Occasions make it necessary to visit a Man of Quality, reflect with your self before you go what may happen to you. Possibly he may not be at home; or if he be, that he will not be spoken with; that the Porter may shut the Door rudely upon you; that you may wait in the Hall among the Foot-men; that none of them will carry your Message to his Lord; or, if they do, that you will meet with nothing but scorn and neglect. When you have prepared your self thus, if you think it worth your while to go upon such Terms, do it; and bear whatever happens as you ought. But do not repine afterwards, and say with your self, That the Business was not worth all this Trouble: For that is a Reflection unbecoming a Philosopher, and shews a vulgar Soul, not reconciled sufficiently to the Accidents of the World.*

## COMMENT.

**T**HE Advice he gives here is much of the same nature with what we met with before in the Ninth Chapter; where he begins thus: *In every Action you undertake, consider, first, with your self, and weigh well the Nature and Circumstances of the Thing, &c.* Only there indeed he continues and illustrates his Discourse, by a very low and familiar instance of *Bathing*; but here he applies it to that much more important one of application to Great Men. There is also this other difference between the two Passages, That the Conclusion and Design of his Advice there, was to persuade Men not to be too much concerned at things

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when they had happened, but to keep their Temper even, and their Reason undisturbed ; whereas here his Business is to bring Men to a prudent forecast, that they may not run on giddily, nor see Things by halves ; but represent to themselves before-hand, all the possible Difficulties and Inconveniences, that can rise upon them, that they may take as true an *Idea* of all the discouraging Circumstances now, as it is possible for the Event to give them afterwards.

For, after we have taken upon us the slavery of waiting upon a Great Man, and met with these Disappointments and cold Neglects, we are apt to sit down discontented, and with much remorse to condemn our own Folly, and take it exceeding ill to be treated with so much insolence and scorn, and so unbecoming our Quality or Desert. Now all that Dissatisfaction is owing to one of these two Causes ; either, That we made a rash and an ill Choice at first ; or else, That these external Accidents make too strong and too tender an Impression upon us. And both these Defects betray a base and a narrow Soul, not suitable in any degree to the Dignity of a Philosopher, who should know how to manage and how to slight, every Accident of this kind ; not suffering himself to be imposed upon like the ignorant Vulgar, with the false appearances of Things, nor mistaking those for matters of Consequence, which are, really and in their own Nature, mere Trifles, and of little or no consideration at all to him.

So that, having in the former Chapter instructed us, what Decorum is to be observed towards Persons of Honour and Authority, who are content to admit us to some familiarity and free conferences with them, and proposed the Prudence of *Socrates* and *Zeno* for the Standard of our Behaviour ; he prescribes to us here the Rules proper to be followed, where we are received with coldness, and disdain, and rougher usage : That, except where some absolute necessity requires

quires, we should have nothing at all to do with such Persons; and when any urgent occasion compels us to chuse this Attendance, and our Business must be followed, though at the expence of all those Hardships and Affronts, then we should settle and compose our Minds before, and not expose our selves to the misfortune of a Surprise, or the weakness of a late Repentance, and wish we had never undertaken it, when these things are come upon us.

## C H A P. LIII.

*In familiar Conversation with your Friends and Acquaintants, do not make it your Business to entertain the Company with tedious Narratives of your self, and your own Affairs. Consider, that their Resentments and yours are very different upon these occasions. And though the Exploits by which you have signalized your self, the Successes you have obtained, the Dangers you have encountred, or the Afflictions you have undergone, may be a very agreeable Story to your self to tell, yet it will not be equally so for others to hear.*

## C H A P. LIV.

*As little will it become you to render your self the common Buffoon, and be always trying to make the Company laugh; for this is a very nice and ticklish thing, exceeding apt to degenerate into Vice and Folly, and (observe it when you will) He that only studies Men's Diversion, shall be sure at the same time to lose their Respect.*

## C H A P. LV.

Of all kind of Discourse, none is more unsafe, none more despicable, than that which breaks in upon Modesty and Good-Manners. Whenever therefore any Person in your presence flies out into Obscenity (if so great a Liberty can decently be taken) reprove him publickly, and put a stop to his lewd Talk. But if that cannot conveniently be done, yet at least do your self the Justice to disapprove it; and by forbearing to join with him, by blushing for him, and by chiding Looks, let all the Company see plainly, that you detest his filthy Ribaldry.

## C O M M E N T.

**H**ERE he descends from conversing with Great Persons, to prescribe the Measures fit to be taken with those of common Quality, such as are of a Condition equal, or inferiour to our own: And that which we are chiefly concerned to take care of in this case, is, the rendring our selves easie and acceptable to all kind of Company in general; to observe such a prudent *Medium*, as may prevent a stiff and formal distance in one extream, and keep off such a sawcy Freedom, as may make us cheap and contemptible in the other. Nay, which is more, we are not only to secure a due respect and value for our selves, but to consult the Interest of those we converse with. And a wise Man will not only endeavour to recommend himself, by making his Discourse free and easie, and diverting, but by making it beneficial and improving too.

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In order to the learning this Art, *Epictetus* gives us warning of several Indecencies that are apt to prejudice People against us: And the first of these is the expatiating upon our selves, chusing out some of our own Performances, or our own Hardships, for our constant Topick, and running divisions perpetually upon our Families, or our Fortunes. And this in truth is the most nauseous and tiresome thing in the World; for there is a Principle of Jealousie in every Man, that turns again at all the fullsome Commendations of our selves, and we presently grow sick of them in our own defence. Nothing is more assuming, and consequently nothing can be more provoking: It argues very little and low Thoughts of all Mankind besides, when we can with such disdain overlook the rest of the World, and imagine no Affairs but our own worthy to furnish out matter for Discourse. And besides, all these extravagant Panegyricks upon our selves, are no better than so many sly Invectives against other People; and he, that takes pains to extol his own Conduct, only makes an invidious Comparison, and always desires to be so understood, as by a Side-wind to reproach and condemn that of his Neighbour. So that a Man full of himself is a common Enemy, no Patience can brook him; and consequently nothing can more effectually contribute to render our Conversation agreeable and entertaining, than the declining to trouble the Company with our own Affairs. Which hath also this further advantage too, that it checks the Vanity of our Temper, abates our Love of Popular Applause, and discovers a true Bravery and nobleness of Spirit.

His next piece of Advice concerns the gay and the facetious Part of Conversation, and here, in pursuance of his former Directions, not to indulge our selves in long and violent Laughter, nor to burst out upon every trivial occasion, he forbids his Profi-

cient to be always acting the Buffoon, and endeavouring to make the Company laugh. And that for this very good reason, because Mirth is a slippery and unfaithful Ground; and they who resolve never to want a Jest, will easily degenerate into Impertinence and Folly. For, when a Man accommodates himself so far to the Humours of the Vulgar, as to consult their Merriment and Diversion, it shews that his Soul is of their Size and Temper, and relishes the same mean, unworthy Pleasures. Indeed, if there be any difference between them, he that labours to entertain another with such Discourse, is the worse, and the greater Fool of the two. So that, whoever makes the Company merry after this manner, does it at his own Expence; for this naturally renders him cheap, and encourages the Hearers to be lavish and sawcy in their turn too. And there cannot be any more effectual course to lose a Man in the Reputation of the World, and rob him of all the Respect that is otherwise due to his Quality, or his Parts, than to be thus profuse of his Wit, and to set up for a common Jester.

And yet it must be owned, that Diversion is the very Soul of Conversation; and some wise Men have frequently studied to entertain the Company with pleasant Discourse, to take off the Imputation of Moroseness and Ill-humour. To those therefore, who upon occasions find it convenient to give a little Loose to Mirth, he adds this most necessary Caution, *Always to keep within the Bounds of Modesty and Decency.* For all obscene Discourse is absolutely inconsistent with the Character of a wise and good Man; and he who pretends to any progress in Philosophy, will be so far from allowing himself in it, that he must not with patience hear any such thing from another. And therefore Epictetus commands such a one, to reprove any that use these uncomely Liberties, provided it can conveniently



veniently and properly be done: As for instance; If the Person be younger than we, and so our Age seem to give us some Authority over him; if he be one that hath any remains of Modesty left, and we have any reason to hope our Rebukes will prove successful; if there be no great distance between his Quality, or his Estate, and ours, so that he is not too big, or too vain to be reprov'd. For in these Circumstances, you may without any breach of Civility do it, and neither the Offender nor the Company will take it ill, or think you too bold, if they understand themselves at all. But it must be confess'd, that this Duty is not always practicable; for there are some Persons, with whom this Liberty cannot be taken; Their Age, or their Condition, may give what they say a Privilege of being pass'd over. Their Temper may render them incapable of Animadversion, or their hardned Wickedness may have put them past all power of its doing good upon them. And in such cases, the attempt would not only be ridiculous, but might possibly be dangerous too. For no Man is oblig'd to do what does not become him, because another hath done so; nor must our Zeal be so warmly pursued, as to break good Order, or give the Company disturbance, or create our selves Enemies, by such indiscreet and unnecessary Corrections. But still there is one Remedy left, and that must be taken in Justice to our selves; which is, by our Silence to refuse the becoming a Party; to demonstrate, that we understand what Behaviour is fit for us; and that we do discreetly disallow those things which Prudence or Good-Manners will not suffer us openly to rebuke.

And here I cannot omit observing, how nice and punctual *Epictetus* is, in suiting the Rules he gives, according to the different Circumstances of the Case in hand: For he had treated before of Dis-

course concerning the Entertainments of the Publick Theatre, the Combats of Gladiators, Horse-Races, Feasts, Meats, and Wines, and Modes, and giving Characters of Men to their prejudice, or their advantage; and upon all such Occasions, he directs us to turn the Discourse off to some other more useful Subject. But here it seems, that is not sufficient; for we must not only change, but reprove it too, if that can properly be done. There, if we cannot turn the Discourse, we may content our selves with being silent; but here it is not every Silence that will serve the turn: It is necessary it should be a sort of emphatical and very significant one, such as may distinguish our Thoughts, and express a Dislike and Detestation of what is indecently spoken.

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C H A P. LVI.

*When the Idea of any Pleasure strikes your Imagination, as you must in other Cases, so should you in this especially, stand upon your Guard, and not suffer your self to be hurried away with the impetuous Torrent. Run not eagerly upon Enjoyment, nor improve the Thought into Action: but take time to consider; and let that time be employed in making a just Computation between the duration of the Pleasure, and that of the Repentance sure to follow it; and then you will not fail to check your Inclinations, and chide your self for indulging them in any Degree at all. Consider farther too, That the denying of those Inclinations will certainly give you an inward Joy, and instead of being reproached*

reproached by your own Conscience ; you shall be comforted and commended by it. But if, upon mature Deliberation, the thing you are moved to, appear no way inconvenient, you may gratifie your Appetite, but you must not let it loose : for even innocent Enjoyments require a streight Rein, and a steady Hand, for fear the Impression be too strong and powerful, and the Pleasures of Sense charm and captivate your Reason. And therefore even in these Cases too, represent to your self the inward Complacency of having done well, and wisely ; and the Triumphs of a good Conscience, after subduing Temptations.

## C O M M E N T.

**T**Here is not in the whole World any thing more pernicious to the Soul, than the Pleasures of Flesh and Sense ; for these fetter and fasten down the Mind ; and God, who saw those destructive Consequences of them, hath therefore in his infinite Wisdom, and marvellous Goodness, made all such Pleasures of exceeding short Continuance. Thus those of the *Epicure* last no longer, than just while his Meats and Drinks lie upon the Tongue ; When once they are swallowed into the Stomach, all the Relish of them is lost and gone, and the Palate returns to its former Habit again. So likewise those Pleasures, which Sense is fondest of, and the most exquisitely affected with, continue no longer, than just the time of Fruition. When that short Moment is once past, the Man is as if it had never been at all. It is very plain too, that Pleasure is properly the Object of the Sensitive Faculties,

culties, and does not extend to the Rational Soul ; for those Creatures that are void of Sense, are not capable of bodily Pleasure.

Nor is this the Condition of bodily Pleasures only, but of those other Satisfactions, which we call so, such as Men take in gay Clothes, pompous Equipage, rich Jewels, and Furniture, large Estates, and the like ; even they are but very short-lived neither. For when once the first Flush of Joy is over, they pall and sink down into nothing ; and Time, in proportion as it makes them familiar to us, makes them flat and insipid too. But, alas ! the Case is not the same in the contrary Extreme ; nor do our Grievs for the loss of these things wear off so fast, as our Satisfactions of acquiring, or possessing them : These are long and lasting, and very often grow by time. Thus Pleasure, it seems, of all sorts, but especially such as affects our bodily Senses, vanishes very quickly ; and well it were for us, if it, and all its Effects went off together : But it leaves a Sting behind it, wounds the Soul, disarms Reason ; and, if it be indulged to excess, does not stop there neither ; but many times proves of terrible Consequence to the Body too. Whereas Abstinence from Pleasure, and the Conquests we gain over it, are of infinite Advantage to the Soul ; fill it with durable Satisfaction, and inspire Joys of quite another kind, Joys agreeable to Reason and uncorrupt Nature, such as no Guilt pollutes, no mixture or remains of Sorrow taint, no Time wears away.

Thus much I thought necessary to premise in general, by way of Introduction to *Epictetus* his Advice, which begins in these Terms : " When the *Idea* of any Pleasure strikes your Imagination, as you must in other Cases, such as Power or Riches, or the like ; so should you in this of Pleasure more especially, stand upon your Guard, and not suffer your self to be hurried away

" away from Thought, to Act. Be not too rash and hasty, but allow your self leisure for better Consideration. And, when you have so far prevailed upon your self, as to gain time, and suspend the gratifying of your Fancy for a while, employ this time in making a just Computation. Weigh first the time of Enjoyment well, and afterwards observe, how infinitely this is over-balanced by that of Repentance. Think how many sad Remembrances, what bitter Remorse, what lasting Shame, what self-condemning Reflections, the being vanquished by this Temptation will cost you; and then you will be ashamed to purchase so fugitive a Pleasure, with so permanent a Misery.

But, that you may have no pretence, no Colour left for so imprudent an Exchange, consider once more the durable Advantages of Self-denial; the sincere and never fading Satisfactions that result from a Lust subdued; the perpetual Applauses of a good Conscience, and the Happiness of being approved by ones own Breast: For if you do but cast these things into the Scale, and give them their due weight, the Disparity will be so manifest, that Appetite must yield to Reason. And if you repeat this again and again, as fit Occasions offer themselves, you will by degrees gain an habitual and compleat Victory, and so absolutely reduce the sensual Inclinations, that they will not be in a Condition to rebel, or give you any considerable disturbance.

Since then the Pleasure lasts no longer than the single Instant of Action, when once that Instant is over, there is no difference between one that hath had this Enjoyment, and one that had it not. And hence it is evident, that Pleasure can have but very little to recommend it. You will say, perhaps, that the Voluptuous Person hath the Satisfaction of Remembrance, and recollecting the  
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Delights he enjoyed, which is a kind of bringing them back again, and an acting them over in Imagination a second time. But, alas! this is a very poor and lame Satisfaction; and we need no other proof of its being so, than those dark and imperfect Ideas, which the remembrance of a pleasant Dream gives us; for those of a past Pleasure are exactly the same, every whit as feeble and imaginary.

But in regard there are some Pleasures no way inconsistent with Duty, and right Reason; such as those of the Marriage Bed, or Bathing after a Fever and the like; therefore he adds one necessary Caution more; That even these Pleasures, which may be innocent and convenient in themselves, should yet be so tempered with a prudent Restraint, that the Gratefulness of them to Sense do not over-bear our Reason; nor we so absolutely give our selves up to the Enjoyment, as to be transported with Rapture and Joy. But even then, when we allow our selves the Fruition, we should check and correct the Exuberance of our Pleasure, by a seasonable Reflection, That Reason ought always to be uppermost; and that it is infinitely more becoming and advantageous to be above Sense, than to be a Slave to it. For indeed, this is as much more eligible, as the due Government of our Passions is better, than the living under the Tyranny and Usurpation of them; as much more Noble, as Reason is Superiour to Instinct, and the Dignity of the Humane Nature, above that of a Brute.

## C H A P. LVII.

*When, upon mature Deliberation, you are persuaded a thing is fit to be done, do it boldly ; and do not affect Privacy in it, nor concern your self at all what impertinent Censures or Reflexion the World will pass upon it. For, if the thing be not Just and Innocent, it ought not to be attempted at all, though never so secretly. And if it be, you do very foolishly to stand in fear of those, who will themselves do ill in censuring and condemning what you do well.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**Here is not any thing that *Epictetus* seems more concerned for, than that Vertue should be chosen for Vertue's sake, That so the Good we do might be compleat and perfect, when done out of a just sense and value of its own intrinsick Worth, without any fordid Allays, or indirect Ends, such as the Opinion of the World, and the desire of Applause and Reputation particularly. For whoever chuses Good upon this account, makes this, and not doing well, his ultimate End, that is, indeed, his Good.

Now if a Man hath consulted his own Reason, and is upon good Grounds convinced, That such or such a thing ought not to be done ; no consideration whatsoever should prevail upon him to do it, because it ought not to be done. And again, if upon a grave and wise Debate with himself, he come to a Resolution, That it should be done, and do it in this Perswasion ; it is most senseless and sneaking to endeavour the concealing of it, from any apprehensions of the Constructions other People will put upon it. For if  
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he be right in resolving, they cannot be so, in interpreting it to his Disadvantage; and at this rate, a Man betrays less Honour, and Regard for a real Good, (for such is a wise and vertuous Action) than he does for a seeming Evil; (for such is a false Opinion, and malicious Censure.) And indeed, generally speaking, this is the Case of the Errors and Misapprehensions of the Vulgar; which Men stand in so much fear of, and are so apt to forego, or at least to disown the Practice of Vertue, lest they should fall under them.

From hence likewise results another very mischievous Effect, which is, That the Conclusions and Dictates of right Reason should be look'd upon as Evil. For so they plainly are, when Men decline and disavow them, since, nothing is ever shunn'd or disclaimed, but under the Notion of Evil.

Farther yet, there is a Third great Inconvenience consequent upon taking these mean and indirect Methods; which is, That such a Man turns Deserter to Vertue, and runs away from the true Standard of all his Behaviour, *viz.* the Nature of the Actions themselves, and the Judgment and Testimony of his own Breast, and gives himself up entirely to be governed by common Opinion, expects no Happiness but what Applause can give him, and fears no Misery but Censure and Reproach; and is so bigotted to the World, as utterly to renounce his own Reason, and think nothing Good or Evil, True or False, but what Common Fame declares to be so.

## C H A P. LVIII.

*As this Sentence, It is Day, and, It is Night, if you take it apart, is most true; but if you join it together, is absolutely false: So for a Man, at a publick Entertainment, to carve himself the best and greatest share; though if he consider his own Body singly, it might be well enough; yet in regard of that Common Right, which this Invitation gives to all that are present, it is most unbecoming and unreasonable. And therefore, when you eat abroad remember that you are to look farther than the bare satisfying of your own Appetite; and to observe all that Decency and Respect, which is due, both to the Company you are joyned with, and to the Master of the House, that invited you.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**He Stoicks are particularly nice and subtle in the illustrating and arguing from Hypothetical Syllogisms: And these are of two sorts, one that they call Disjunctive, the other Conjunctive or Complex. The Disjunctive are such as consist of contradictory parts, so that if one be true, the other must needs be false; and if the one be false, the other is as certainly true. As for instance; when I say, *It is either Day or Night, but it is Night, therefore it is not Day.* Thus by affirming the one part, you deny the other; and by denying the one, you affirm the other: As when I make my Assumption thus; *but it is not Day, and conclude from thence, therefore it is Night; or, but it is not Night, therefore*

*therefore it is Day.* And such a Disjunctive Proposition as this, whose parts are inconsistent with one another, (as when we say, *It is either Day or Night,* ) is received as an Axiom ; that is, as a Truth self-evident, such as is plain and agreeable to the Common Sense, and Notions of all Mankind. For such Propositions the Stoicks used to call Axioms.

Now a Complex Proposition consists of two Parts ; but these such, as have a necessary connexion with, and dependance upon, one another, so that if one be allowed, the other follows in course ; for which occasion they are very properly termed, the Antecedent and the Consequent. And the Condition of these Propositions is this ; That if you affirm the Antecedent you establish the Consequent ; but if you deny the Consequent, you overthrow the Antecedent at the same time. For instance, this is a true Conjunction, *If it be Day, it is not Night* ; because upon this Antecedent *It is Day*, the Assumption follows, *But if it be Day it is not Night* ; so that putting this into one Complex Proposition, the Antecedent infers the Consequent ; for thus you proceed, *But it is Day, therefore it is not not Night.* And so likewise if you deny the Consequent, you deny the Antecedent also ; as if you say, *But it is not Night* ( which is as much as to say that it is, for the two Negatives here make one Affirmative ) *therefore it is not Day.* And this is the Case of a Conjunctive or Complex Proposition, and the Rule it proceeds upon,

Let us now see, what use *Epictetus* makes of this, and how he applies it to his present purpose. This Proposition, *It is either Day, or Night*, in a disjunctive Syllogism, he tells us, carries its own Evidence along with it, and is uncontestably true. But in a Conjunctive Syllogism the case is much otherwise. For when these two parts are brought into one Complex Proposition

Proposition, then to affirm the one, we must deny the other; and the Sentence must of necessity run thus, *If it be Day, it is not Night.* Now then (says he) as this Disjunctive Proposition, in a Disjunctive Syllogism, is most true, because the whole Argument depends upon it, and all the stress lies in the opposition of the parts thus disjoined; but in a Complex Proposition it is most false, for the Conjunction is there torn asunder, by the necessary insertion of the Negative Particle, *If it be Day, it is not Night.* So likewise at a publick Entertainment, however it may be for the Advantage of a Man's own Body to carve the best for one's self, and to scramble for the greatest share; yet this is absolutely inconsistent with that Equity and Common Right of Humane Society at all such publick Meetings. For a Man is not here to look upon himself, as a Disjunctive, and to act as if he stood single; but to consider himself in conjunction with the rest of the Company, and to be guilty of nothing, that may break that Conjunction, by infringing the Privileges that lie in common, and engrossing any such for his own private Interest.

When therefore you dine in Company (says he) do not regard the Cravings of your own Appetite, nor pick out the choicest part of the Dinner to gratifie your own Palate. But consider, that there is another Duty, besides what you owe to your own Body, and that is a Duty of mutual participation, and assuming no more, than what you are content to allow to others, who have indeed equal pretensions with your self.

Now nothing can be more manifest, than that by this instance of a Feast, *Epicætes* meant a great deal more than he hath expressed: And intended no doubt, that we should stretch this Rule to all the Affairs of Humane Life, that concern others as well as our selves, and to all our Commerce and Dealing with one another. For all greediness, and grasping at more than belongs to us, loosens and breaks the Bonds of

Humane Society, which can never be maintained otherwise, than by allowing every body the share that is due to him. Of how great efficacy this is towards the uniting Men together, and making that union durable and strong, besides what common Experience teaches us, we have an instance, even in the worst and vilest Men. For the very Combinations that Thieves and publick Robbers make with one another, though these Men have cast off all the Ties of Justice and Common Honesty, are yet preserved, so long as they keep to the private Agreements made among themselves, and are content, that the Booty should be divided equally. And sure strict Justice must need cement Men very strongly, when even this feeble imitation of it, can go so far in the confirming and maintaining a Community founded in Injustice.

So then, after the various Directions and Exhortations in the foregoing parts of this Book, some of which were designed to excite Men to true Freedom, some to recommend Fortitude, others Generosity, and Greatness of Soul, others Prudence, and Temperance: This Chapter is designed to make Men just; and, in order to the effecting this, to remove first of all that greatest obstruction to it, which is Avarice, and an inordinate Desire of more than in strictness belongs to us.

## C H A P. LIX.

*If you take upon you a Character above your capacity, you fall into this two-fold Inconvenience, first to miscarry in what you have undertaken, and then to lose the opportunity of undertaking somewhat else, more proportionable to your ability, in which you might have come off with Honour.*

## C O M M E N T.

**W**E are not always to aim at that Good, which is most noble and excellent in it self, but that which we are best qualified for, and is most suitable to our own Circumstances. For there never comes any good of extravagant Undertakings. So that we shall do well to proceed leisurely in the choice of the Figure we desire to make in the World, and not aspire to things above us. An eminent Orator, or a Philosopher in a Common wealth; a Pilot, or Master in a Ship; a Prince, or publick Magistrate in a State: These are Characters that look great and gay; but yet every body is not cut out for them. And it is much more graceful for a Man to be in a lower Station, where he fills his Post, and tops his part; than to be in a higher; which he cannot come up to, nor discharge the Duties of with that decency and applause that is expected. Thus a Man had better be a good Usher, and teach the first grounds of Learning well, than an unable Master who cannot finish what is well begun. And it is more desirable to be an honest and prudent Manager of a private Family, than a bad Governour of a City or Nation. For, besides the prejudice such persons do themselves, in not com-

ing up to the Dignity of a Character too lofty for them ( which miscarriage I would have rated, not by the Approbation or the Censure of the World, but according to the real Nature of the Character it self ) they are unfortunate in another respect. For they have not only come off very scurvily in attempting what they were not fit for ; but they have slipp'd an opportunity too, of behaving themselves well, and gaining applause in something else which they were fit for. For it is in Humane Life, as it is in a Play-house, where the Praise is due, not to the Part, but to the Performance ; and he that plays a Servant well, is look'd upon with more approbation, and reputed a better Actor, than he that attempts to play a Man of Honour, or a Prince, and does it ill.

This Chapter too seems to me to have a more immediate regard to Equity and Justice ; for it advises every body to be content with that part, which Providence sees fittest for them upon this Stage of Life ; that they should not affect Characters above them, nor be desirous of, or dissatisfied with, those that are assigned to other people.

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## C H A P. LX.

*As in walking it is your great Care, not to run your Foot upon a Nail, or to tread awry, and strain your Leg ; so let it be in all the Affairs of Humane Life, not to hurt your Mind, nor offend your Judgment. And this Rule, if you observe it carefully in all your deportment, will be a mighty security to you in your Undertakings.*



## C O M M E N T.

**T**HE Soul of Man is injur'd or wounded two ways: Either, when it is pricked with brutish Inclinations, and vehement Passions, which fasten it to the Body; in which it makes some resistance, but yet it is overpowered by the prevailing force of Passion, and yields at last, though with reluctancy. Or else, when its Judgment is perverted, and the Byas of sensual Objects draw it so strongly, that it does not make any distinction betwixt its own rational Nature, and the other inferiour and irrational parts, which are the Seat of the Passions.

This excellent Guide therefore warns us to have a care of both these Inconveniences, and to proceed warily in all the Affairs of Humane Life, as we do when we would tread sure in walking. That we decline those brutish Appetites, which would gall and wound the Soul, and fix wholly upon bodily Objects, and fasten down the Soul to Body much stronger and closer, than any Nail can possibly join material things; for they make the Mind forget it self, and mistake these Affections, and the Body they serve, for one and the same Substance.

This therefore is analogous to piercing the Foot with a Nail; but the other Misfortune, that of a perverted Judgment, he resembles to treading awry, and straining, or putting out a Leg; because this Error of the Mind proceeds from the Imagination, that part which is lowest in the Soul, as the Foot is in the Body; and by which it holds correspondence with the corporeal, and animal Life. And the Advice he gives upon this occasion is, that, as we take care to keep our Body upright when we walk, so we should be exceeding cautious and tender of the Soul, when it goes abroad, and concerns

it self in the Affairs of the World ; That the Faculty of Reason, which is predominant in our Minds, and the very Character and Prerogative of Humane Nature, make no false steps ; That it do not forget it self, or its Authority ; that it be neither giddy through eagerness of Desire, and heat of Passion, or grow corrupt, and dull, and stupid, through Sloth and Effeminacy.

And if we did but manage our selves with the same wariness in our Actions, as we do in our steps : If we would but look before us constantly, and be sure to take good footing, this he tells us, would be a mighty security to us in all our Undertakings. For, though Humane Nature will be the same still, and all our Vigilance cannot set it absolutely above Error and Frailty ; yet the ill Consequences of these Infirmities would be in a great measure prevented. We might slip, but we should never fall ; and the slips we did make, would be but few, and those easily recover'd too. For thus we find, that, when through some little incogitancy we happen to touch upon a Nail, or make a false step ; a small recollection will serve the turn, to disengage our Foot, before the Nail hath run in too deep ; and to correct that Trip, which was but a slight one, and made before we were aware of it.

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## C H A P. LXI.

*The Necessities of the Body are the proper measure of our Care for the things of the World ; and those that can supply these are enough, as the Shoe is said to fit the Man, that answers to the bigness of the Foot. But if once you leave*

*leave this Rule, and exceed those necessities, then you are carried into all the Extravagancies in the World. Then you do not value your Shoe for fitting the Foot, unless it be gilded too, and afterwards from gilding you go to a rich Purple; and from that again, to having it studded, and set with Jewels. For when once a Man hath exceeded the bounds of Moderation and Convenience, he never knows where to stop.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**Here are two things to be considered in Cloaths, and Diet, and Goods, and Estate, and whatever else is requisite for our Bodies, that is, the getting, and the using of them. He hath informed us already after what manner they are to be used: and commanded us to this purpose, That those wants of the Body, which are necessary to be supplied, so as to render it serviceable to the Soul, ought to determine this point: By which means all superfluities are cut off, and every thing that tends only to Luxury and vain Pomp. Now he tells us, what proportion we ought to be content with, and what should be the measure of our Labours and our Desires in the getting an Estate; and this he says is the Body too. For the end of getting these things, is, that we may use them, so that, as far as they are of use to us, so far, and in such proportions may we desire, and endeavour after them; and they are only so far useful, as they become serviceable to the Body, and supply its necessities. Consequently then, the Body, and its wants, which determine, how far these things are capable of being used, do also determine.

mine, how far they are fit to be desired, and what measure of them a Man ought in reason to sit down satisfied with.

Let us look then at the Foot, for instance, and see what wants it labours under, and what supplies are sufficient for it; and, when we have done so, we shall find, that good plain Leather is all it needs: A good upper Leather to keep the Foot tight and warm, and a stout Sole to defend the Ball of the Foot from being hurt by what it treads upon. But now, if a Man bear regard to Ornament and Luxury, as well as Use and Convenience; then nothing less than Gold, and Purple, and Jewels, will serve the turn, and one of these Extravagancies only serves to make way for another. For, it seems, the *Romans* were grown so curious and vain, as to wear rich Purple Shoes, and Shoes set with precious Stones, and these were more exquisite and modish Vanities than gilded ones.

Now just thus it is in the getting, and the spending an Estate: When a Man hath once transgressed those bounds, which Nature and Necessity have set him, he wanders no body knows whither; and is continually adding one foolish Expence to another, and one idle whimzie to another, till at last he be plunged over Head and Ears in Luxury and Vanity. For, these were the only Causes of seducing him at first; and, when once he had broke loose from his measures, a thousand imaginary wants presented themselves, and every one of these gave him as great a disturbance, as if they had been real ones. At first he wanted only ten thousand Pound, then twenty; and when he was possess'd of this, he wanted forty, as much as ever he did the first Ten; so he would a hundred, if he had forty, and so to all Eternity; for he has now let his Desires loose, and these are a boundless Ocean never to be filled.

Now

Now nothing is more evident, than that those Desires which do not keep within the bounds of Use and Convenience, do, and must needs grow infinite and insatiable. Not only, because this is the last Fence, and there is nothing left to stop them afterwards; but because we see plainly, that, when they exceed these things, they quickly neglect and disregard them too; forget the ends, to which they are directed, and instead of preserving, sometimes destroy, the Body. Thus we often ruin our Health, and distort our Limbs, only for Ornament and Fashion, and make those very things our Diseases, which Nature intended for Remedies against them.

And possibly, upon this account more particularly, *Epictetus* might make choice of a Shoe to illustrate his Argument. For this instance is the more emphatical and significant, because, if we do not take care to fit the Foot, but make it bigger than it ought to be, for Beauty and Ornament, it hinders our going instead of helping us, and oftentimes makes us stumble, and fall very dangerously. So that it is plain, the Considerations, which relate to our using the things of the World, will give us great light into that part of our Duty, which relates to the getting of them; and the Rules, we are to be governed by, are in great measure the same in both Cases.

And these Chapters too, which prescribe to us the Rules, and the Duty of Moderation, both in using and getting an Estate, may in my Opinion be very properly referred to the same common Head of Justice with the former.

## C H A P. LXII.

*When Women are grown up to Fourteen, they begin to be courted and caressed; then they think, that the recommending themselves to the Affections of the Men is the only business they have to attend to, and so presently fall to tricking, and dressing, and practising all the little engaging Arts peculiar to their Sex: In these they place all their hopes, as they do all their happiness in the success of them. But it is fit they should be given to understand, that there are other attractives much more powerful than these; That the Respect we pay them, is not due to their Beauty, so much as to their Modesty, and Innocence, and unaffected Vertue. And that these are the true, the irresistible Charms, such as will make the surest and most lasting Conquests.*

## C O M M E N T.

**S**ince he had in the foregoing Discourses allowed his Philosopher to marry, it was but reasonable, that he should instruct him here, what Methods are most proper to be made use of in the choice of a Wife, and which are the most necessary and desirable Qualifications for her: This therefore he does, in short, but very significant Observations, shewing what a wise Man should chiefly regard, and exposing at the same time the mischiefs, that the generality of Men fall into, by taking wrong measures. Most People, says he, when they are disposed to marry, look for a young and a beautiful Mistress; then

then they cringe, and flatter, and adore her; keep a mighty distance, and accost her in the most respectful and submissive Terms imaginable; and the end of all this is no other, than the enjoyment of her Person. The Women know the meaning of all this well enough, and manage themselves accordingly; they dress, and set off their Persons to the best advantage, and these are the Arts they study to recommend themselves by.

Now in truth, though we declaim against this Vanity and Folly in the Sex, yet the Men are much more to blame than They. For the Original of all this Vanity is from our selves: And the Folly is ours, when we pay so much respect upon accounts that so little deserve it. It is in our power to reform what we condemn, and it is our Duty to do it. We should shew them, that no Beauty hath any Charms, but the inward one of the Mind; and that a gracefulness in their Manners is much more engaging, than that of their Person and Mien. That Meekness, and Obedience, and Modesty, are the true and lasting Ornaments: For she, that has these, is qualified as she ought to be for the management and governing of a Family, for the bearing and educating of Children, for an affectionate and tender Care of her Husband, and for submitting to a prudent and frugal way of living. And when all is done, these, and these only, are the Charms and the Ornaments, that render Wives amiable, and give them the best Title to our Honour and Respect.



## CHAP. LXIII.

*There is no surer sign of Stupidity, and want of Sense, than to trifle away a great deal of time in things relating to the Body, as to be long at Exercise, or at Meals, or in Drinking, or in the other Functions of Nature. For we ought to look upon all that is done to the Body, as things by the bye, and the Improvement of the Soul, as that which challenges our Time, and is the true and main End, and Business of our Lives.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**S Men of topping Parts, and noble Dispositions, are always aiming at something that is manly and brave, and aspire after as high degrees of Accuracy and Perfection, as their Nature can carry them up to; so sluggish and heavy Souls are ever employing themselves in something that is little, and vulgar, and insignificant, where they hope to meet with no Difficulty, and from whence they are sure to reap no Honour. So that, when we consider Man, as he is a Creature, whose very Essence is a Reasoning Soul, and whose Body is only the Instrument of that Soul, contrived for her use, and to be employed at her Pleasure; for such a one, I say, to concern himself very little in the Operations of the Soul, but to let that lie idle and uncultivated, while all his Time and Pains are bestowed upon the Body, argues a mighty Defect in Nature, and indeed can scarce proceed from any other

other Cause, than such a Defect. For what Artificer of any Note or Skill at all would spend his whole time upon scouring his Tools, without putting them to the Uses they were intended for, and following his Trade with them? And yet this senseless Wretch is every Man, that applies all his Care and Time to the Service of his Body, and neglects his Mind.

But in Truth, this mighty Assiduity upon the Body, does not only betray want of Sense, but excess of Passion too. For the time we spend upon any Object is usually proportionable to the Pleasure we take in it, and the Affection we have for it. And for this Reason, we ought to look upon all the Pains we are at upon the Body, only as a thing by the bye; to have very little Tenderness for, and take but small Satisfaction in it, and to transfer all these things to an Object more worthy of them, even that Soul, whose Instrument and Servant this Body is; for they are all its due: and this is the true Measure and Rule, by which we should be governed, in the distribution of our Services to each of them.

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#### C H A P. LXIV.

*When any Man does you an Injury, or reflects upon your Good Name, consider with your self, that he does this out of a Persuasion, that it is no more than what you deserve, and what becomes him to say or do. And it cannot be expected, that your Opinion of things, but his own, should give Law to his Behaviour. Now if*  
that

*that Opinion of his be Erroneous, the Misfortune is not yours, but his, who is thus led into Mistakes concerning you. For the Truth of a Proposition is not shaken one whit, by a Man's supposing it to be false; the Consequence is not the worse, but the Person that judges amiss of it is. Such Considerations as these may serve to dispose you to Patience and Meekness; and by degrees you will be able to bear the most scurrilous Reproaches, and think the bitterest, and most insolent Traducer, worth no other return than this mild Answer, That these, it seems, are his Thoughts of you, and it is not strange, that this Man should vent his own Opinion freely, and act according to it.*

C O M M E N T.

**T**HIS Chapter is plainly intended to persuade us to bearing of Injuries with Meekness and Moderation; and the Arguments made use of to this purpose are Two.

The first proceeds upon a Foundation evident to common Sense, and confirmed by the Practice and Experience of all the World; which is, That every Man acts in agreement with his own particular Notions of things, and does what, at the instant of doing it, appears to him fittest to be done. And therefore, if his Apprehensions differ from ours, as it cannot be any great Matter of Wonder, so neither does it minister any just Cause of Resentment, because he follows the Dictates of his Breast, and I follow mine, and so do all the World. So that it would be a most extravagant and senseless thing for me to be angry for his acting according to Nature,  
and

and upon a Principle univerſally conſented to by all Mankind.

But you will ſay perhaps, That his following his own Opinion is not the thing you quarrel with, but the entertaining an ill Opinion of you, for which there is no Ground or Colour of Juſtice. Now, upon Examination of this Pretence too, it will be found, that you have not at all mended the Matter, but that this is as ridiculous and abſurd a Paſſion as the other. For if he have done you no harm, where is the Provocation? and that it is plain he hath not, for no body is the worſe for it but himſelf. He that thinks he does well when he really does ill, and miſtakes Falſhoods for Truth, is under a dangerous Deluſion, and ſuffers extreamly by his Error. And therefore the Man that injures your Perſon or your Reputation, does but wound himſelf all the while: And this he does more effectually, and to his own greater Prejudice, than it is poſſible for you in the height of all your deſired Revenge, or for the moſt Potent and malicious Enemy in the World, to do. For whatever the World commonly eſteems moſt noxious, can reach no farther than the Body, or the External Enjoyments, and conſequently does not, in ſtrict ſpeaking, hurt the Man himſelf: But Error is a Blemiſh upon the Soul, an Evil that affects his Eſſence, and taints the very diſtinguiſhing Character of the Humane Nature.

Now, that the Perſon who entertains this falſe Opinion, and not He, concerning whom it is entertained, receives all the Prejudice by it, he proves beyond all Contradiſtion, by the Inſtance of a complex Propoſition. For, ſuppoſe one ſhould ſay, *If it be Day, then the Sun is above the Horizon*, and another Perſon ſhould maintain that this is falſe; his ſtanding out againſt it, does not

in any degree weaken the Truth of the Assertion, nor invalidate the necessary dependence of the Two Parts of it upon each other: It remains in the same Perfection still; but the Person who judges amiss concerning it, does not so. Thus the Man that affronts or traduces you contrary to all the Rules of Justice, and Honour, and Duty, injures himself, but you continue untouch'd; and neither the Edge of the Weather, nor the Venom of his Tongue can enter you. Especially if you are, as you ought to be, fully convinced, that there is no such thing as Good or Evil to be had from any thing, but what falls within the Compass of our own Choice.

When therefore you have called up your Reason, and have reflected, first, how natural it is for every Man to be governed by his own Sense of things; and then, that the Injury does not really reach you, but falls back upon the Person who vainly intended it for you; this will cool your Passion, and fill you with a generous Disdain, you will think his impotent Malice deserves to be slighted only, and may check both his Folly, and your own Resentment, with some such scornful return as this, *That he does but what all the World do*; for though all are not of the same mind, yet in that vast variety of Opinions every Man acts according to his own.

## C H A P. LXV.

*Every thing hath two Handles, the one soft and manageable, the other such as will not endure to be touched. If then your Brother do you an Injury, do not take it by the hot and the hard handle, by representing to your self all the aggravating Circumstances of the Fact; but look rather on the soft side, and extenuate it as much as is possible, by considering the nearness of the Relation, and the long Friendship and Familiarity between you, Obligations to Kindness, which a single Provocation ought not to dissolve. And thus you will take the accident by its manageable handle.*

## C O M M E N T.

**A**LL the parts of this material World are composed of different Principles and contrary Qualities: From whence it comes to pass, that in some respects they agree, and can subsist together, and in others they are opposite, and incompatible, and destructive of one another. Thus the Fire hath the two Qualities of hot and dry, most remarkable in it. With regard to its heat it agrees well with the Air, and is compatible with it; but its drought is repugnant to the moisture of the Air, and contends with it, and destroys it. And this Observation holds in Moral, as well as Natural, Philosophy. For thus an Injury received from a Brother hath two handles, and is capable of different Constructions and different Resentments, according to that handle we take it by. Consider the

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Man,

Man, my Brother, my Friend, my old Play-fellow, and Acquaintant, and this is the soft and pliable side, it disposes me to Patience and Reconciliation, and Kindness: But if you turn the other side, and regard only the Wrong, the Indignity, the unnatural Usage of so near a Relation; this is the untractable part, it will not bear the touch, and disposes to nothing but Ravage and Revenge. Now it is plain, that what we esteem light and very tolerable, is entertained by us with Easiness and Patience, and makes no change in our Cheerfulness and Temper; but what we look upon as grievous and insupportable, leaves very angry Resentments, and melancholy Impressions, and utterly discomposes the evenness and quiet of our Minds. This is the natural result of such Accidents, and such Apprehensions. But now, since it is our Duty always to preserve the Mind sedate and calm, not to suffer it either to be dejected with Grief and Sullenness, or ruffled with Anger; since we are obliged to bear whatever happens to us with Patience and Moderation; and since all things have two handles, one that will, and the other that will not, abide the Touch, it is plain that the way to discharge this Obligation, is always to lay hold on the right and the tractable handle. For in Truth, all things whatsoever, Riches and Poverty, Health and Sickness, Marriage and Celibacy, Children and no Children; and, to be short, all the Accidents of humane Life are just as you use and receive them, and have both their Conveniences to recommend them, and their Inconveniences to lessen our esteem of them.

Thus Riches are desirable, if you consider the Advantages of Plenty, and this is their soft handle; but then they are attended with infinite Care, acquired with Toil, possess'd with Fear, lost with Remorse and Trouble; and these Anxieties are  
allays



allays and abatements upon them, and their untractable Handle. Poverty seems very tolerable, when we reflect upon the Quiet and the undisturbed Retirements of that state; but if we turn the Tables, and observe the Indigence and Dependence of it, the Neglect, and the Scorn that it exposes one to, these make it very dreadful and almost insupportable. Health is very desirable, upon the account of that perfect ease and freedom we enjoy with it; the Vigour of our Spirits, and the ready and punctual Obedience of all our Parts, in discharging their respective Duties: But even this hath its Incumbrances too, the Arrogance and assuming Pride, and that Confidence in their own Strength, to which fulness of Blood commonly exposes Men. Sickness appears a very tolerable Evil, when we reflect, that, as the Spirits are low, so are the Passions too, and the Mind is, then more free and undisturbed: But the Faintings, and Languishings, and Uneasinesses of a sick Bed, are the hard and the heavy Handle. Marriage is recommended to us by the satisfaction of having Issue of our own; the tender Care and mutual Affection of both Parties; but then it hath its Bitter, as well as its Sweet, the multiplying of Cares, and creating new Wants to one's self, an inordinate Fondness, and a perpetual Uneasiness and Fears for those we love so dearly. And surely the want of Children, which is commonly esteemed so mighty an Unhappiness, hath a great deal to extenuate it; for this leaves a Man free and easie, qualifies him to encounter with any Difficulties, delivers him from all that anxious Concern, which the Care and Dependence of a Family must of necessity distract him with; it allows him leisure for attending better Studies, and disengages him from that extravagant Folly, of making himself a Slave to the World, and enjoying nothing while he lives, that he may leave a little more to his Family when

he dies; and, which in my Opinion is the greatest misfortune of all, it brings him under no Temptation of Indulgence and Fondness for lewd and ungracious Children: For though their being such is a mighty Affliction, yet, alas! we too often make it a greater to our selves; and love their very Vices, because our own Children are guilty of them. Even Insolencies, and Injuries, and Affronts, have something to extenuate them; for very often, when Men reproach us, they bring us better acquainted with our own Concerns, and tell us something we did not know before; but, to be sure, they always minister occasions of Patience, and exercise our Virtue. Corporal Pains and Punishments are of all others the most formidable to humane Nature; and yet the anguish of these would be mitigated, and we should in some degree be reconciled to them, did we but reflect what good they do us; did we consider, that they try the Soul, as Fire does Metals, and purifie it from its Dross. And if there were no other Benefit to be had from them, yet the very enduring them with Courage and Constancy is it self a very great one. And much more it is for a Man's real advantage to fall into Afflictions, and behave himself gallantly under them, than never to be distressed or afflicted at all. For the escaping Afflictions is only a piece of good Fortune, which reaches to the Body, or the Estate, and no farther; but the bearing them with Fortitude and Decency is a Happiness of the Soul, and what the Man is properly the better for. Nay, lastly, to shew that there neither is, nor can be any thing without the Two Handles we speak of, even our Enemies themselves have them; and it is a very feasible thing to make a Benefit of them too; For their Spight awakens our Care, puts us upon examining into our own Passions and Failings more nicely; and the knowing how curious they will be  
to

to observe, and how pleased to find our Faults, renders us more circumspect and wary in all our Behaviour. And these are such valuable Considerations, that *Pintarch* thought it worth his while to write a Tract on purpose upon this Subject, to shew how a Man may manage himself so, as to improve the Malice of his Enemies, and convert it to his own Advantage.

Vid. *Plutarch. Moral. Tom. 1.* πῶς ἂν τις ὅπ' ἐχθρῶν ὠφελῶται.

## CHAP. LXVI.

*There is no Consequence or necessary Connexion at all between these Assertions : I am richer than you, therefore I am a better Man than you ; or, I am more learned, or eloquent, than you, therefore I am better than you. But all the Inference that can be made from such Comparisons, is only this : I am a richer Man than you, therefore my Estate is larger than yours ; I am more Eloquent than you, therefore my Expressions are more proper, and my Style more delicate than yours. And what is all this to the purpose? For neither the Estate nor the Style is the Man ; and consequently these may be the better, and yet you may not be one whit the better.*

## COMMENT.

**M**EN of Letters commonly shew their Talent in quaintness of Expression and exact Composition, which is a nicety unbecoming a Philosopher, except this Faculty were instilled very early,

and grew up with him ; so that Education and long Custom have made him so great a Master of Language, that his Rhetorick be not laboured or affected, but flow naturally from him. And even the Man who is thus happy, must not value himself upon it ; because this is not the End a Philosopher ought to aim at, nor the peculiar Excellence of humane Nature. Elegance is properly what such Studies pretend to ; and he that succeeds well in them, gains the Reputation of a good Poet, or a good Historian. But he, that aspires to the Character of a Good Man, and desires to distinguish himself by a Life conformable to the best Reason, proposes an End agreeable to such a Life ; and consequently cannot have any pretence to prefer himself before another, for any advantages of Eloquence that he hath above him. For there is a wide difference between such a one's Eloquence and himself : Nor is this the essential Property and Prerogative of his Nature, that he should receive his Denomination from it, as every Artificer is distinguished by his Profession. So that all the boast that can be allowed him in this case, comes only to thus much, *My Language is better than yours.* And this Instance is what I the rather have chosen to insist upon, because I imagine *Epictetus* his main intention here, was to give his Philosopher a check, for that superstitious Nicety very common among them, of being over-curious and elaborate in their Compositions, and spending too much time and pains about Words. But, because this was a tender point, that other Instance of the Richer Man's exalting himself is added, the better to cover his Design, and make the Reproof the softer.

## C H A P. LXVII.

*If any Man bathes too soon, do not you presently say, He hath done ill in it; but only, that he did it early. If a Man drink a great deal of Wine, do not censure him for having done ill; but only say, That he drinks a great deal: For how is it possible for you to know whether he did ill or no, unless you were conscious of his Intentions, and saw the Grounds he went upon? And this Caution, which I here advise you, is the only way to prevent that common Injury and Inconvenience, of determining rashly upon outward appearances, and denouncing peremptorily concerning things that you do not know.*

## C O M M E N T.

**H**E would have us proceed in our Judgment of Men's Actions with great accuracy and circumspection: Not to be too forward in giving our Opinion of any kind, either in praise or dispraise, acquitting or condemning of them, till we are first well satisfied of the Person's Intention, what Reasons he proceeded upon, and what End he directed it to. For these are the very Considerations that make an Action formally good or evil; and according as these vary, they may deserve a very different Interpretation. Thus a Man may give Blows, and do good in it (if this be intended to correct a Fault;) he may give one Sustainance to his prejudice (if it be designed to feed his Disease;) nay, matters may be so ordered, that Stealing shall be an

Act of Justice, and Restitution an Injury, as if the Object of both be a Mad-man's Sword.

If then we would deal honestly and fairly, we must judge of Actions according to the Circumstances that appear to us, and as they are in themselves. When we see a Man bathe before the usual Hour, all we should say of it is, That he hath done it early; without pretending to determine the Quality of the Fact, or calling it good or evil, till we know what it was that moved him to do so. Possibly he was obliged to sit up all Night, and wanted this Refreshment to supply his loss of Sleep. Now this and the like are very material Considerations; for a Man's motives and intention quite alter the nature of the thing. You ought not then to be too hasty in passing Judgment upon this Bathing out of course; for till these things are known, the Quality of the Fact does not lie before you, nor have you any matter to proceed upon. Thus again a Man may drink a larger proportion of Wine than ordinary, and there may be several Reasons that will justify him in it; the Constitution of his Body, or the Season of the Year, or the Temperament of the Air, may make it necessary. And consequently what rash and busy People are apt to condemn, when well enquired into, proves no more than Duty and Prudence, done to satisfy Nature, or to support the Spirits in faint, sultry Weather, or to keep out moist Fogs or pestilential Vapours.

Now if we do thus, as he advises, and stop at the Actions themselves, without presuming to applaud, or to condemn them, till we have thoroughly examined into the Grounds of them, and are satisfied of the Man's Disposition and Design, we decline an Injustice and an Inconvenience, which otherwise it is impossible to avoid. And that is, the knowing one thing, and judging another; the determining more than we have Evidence for. For  
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in both the Instances before us, nothing appears but the outward Act, and its Circumstances, that the *Bathing was early*, that the *Wine was much*; but the Causes of these do not appear, upon which depends the moral Good or Evil of the thing; and yet the busy World are ever giving their definitive Sentence in this point too. And what can be more rash, more injurious, more absurd than this, from what they do see, peremptorily to pronounce of what they do not see?

Now since Men's Minds, and the secret Springs of their Actions, do so very seldom fall within our notice, I take *Epictetus* his Design here to be the dissuading us in general from judging Men at all: And indeed it is but prudent for our own sakes, as well as fit for theirs, to be very sparing in this particular; that, by suspending our Judgment, we may not fall under the shame of retracting it afterwards upon better Information. And therefore he would not have us over-forward, either in our Censures, or our Commendations; though he levelled this Chapter chiefly, no doubt, against the Condemning side, because the Injury, done by rash Censures, is generally greater, and because the Evil is a great deal more popular; for the World is not rash only, but ill-natured too; they are apt and glad to find Faults, and forward sometimes to make them. This base practice therefore lay more directly to the Author's purpose, which was to instruct us in another Branch of Justice, one indeed no less necessary than any of the rest; *viz.* That which concerns our Neighbour's Reputation.



## C H A P. LXVIII.

*Never profess your self a Philosopher, nor talk much of Rules and wise Observations, among the Ignorant and Vulgar; but let your Rules be seen in your Practice. Thus, when you are at a Publick Entertainment, discourse not of Temperance and Moderation to the Company; but let your own Example teach it them; and remember, that Socrates upon all occasions declined Ostentation; insomuch, that when some Persons in derision came to him, and desired him to recommend them to a Philosopher, he carried them to some that profess'd themselves such, without expressing the least Indignation at the Affront they had put upon him.*

## C H A P. LXIX.

*Nay, if you happen in Conversation with ignorant and common Men, though they start a Discourse concerning some Point in Philosophy, do you forbear joining with them in it: For when Men are forward to vent their Notions, it is a shrewd sign they are not well digested. It is possible your Silence may be interpreted Ignorance, and that some of the Company may be confident, and rude enough, to tell you so. But if you hear this Reproach without being concerned, then be assured your Philosophy begins to have its due effect: For, as Sheep do not give up again the Grass they have eaten,*

to shew how well they are fed; but prove the Goodness of the Pasture and their own Case, by concocting their Meat well, and bringing a large Fleece, and giving large quantities of Milk; so must you approve the Excellence of your Doctrines to the World, not by Disputes and plausible Harangues, but by digesting them into practice, and growing strong in Vertue.

## C O M M E N T.

**B**Y this Passage you may plainly perceive, that the Person address'd to is not supposed to be a compleat Philosopher; for such a one is in no danger of bringing up indigested Notions; nor can he need the Advice given to that purpose. This is applicable only to one that is still in a state of Probation and Proficiency, who hath not yet absolutely deliver'd his Mind from the importunate Passions of Popularity and Self conceit, and affecting to be thought wise. Vices, which this Author hath taken great Pains to expose, and reform, and that, as by other Arguments, so particularly by one, which the Method taken in this Chapter plainly insinuates; viz.

That as one cannot with any truth say, That the Brass, while it is melting down, is a Statue, or that an Embryo is a Man; so neither can we, That a Person, who is still under Discipline and proficiency, is a Philosopher. These are the rude and imperfect Beginnings of what is to come after; but they are not the Things themselves: They are the Matter under preparation, but they have not the Form, which must constitute their Essence: And, though they be in never so fair a Disposition to receive it, yet till this is done, they are not the perfect Beings,  
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which they must and would be. But, though in other cases it be sufficient to say, That to call them so were a Breach of Truth, yet in this that seems too gentle an Imputation: For there is, in a truly Philosophical Life, something so great and venerable, something so much above the common Condition of Humane Nature, and so very near approaching to Divine, that the ascribing such exquisite Perfection to Persons, who are as yet only climbing up to it, may justly seem, not only a bold Falshood, but an impious and blasphemous one too.

Shall then that Man, who must not presume to call himself a Philosopher, take upon him the Office of one? Shall he set himself in the Chair, and think it becomes him, who is but a Learner, to teach, and magisterially dictate to others? No, certainly: it is fit he should know his distance, and keep it. But you'll object, That *this will be a mighty Hindrance to his Proficiency, by debarring him that Discourse with Men of less Attainments, which should exercise and improve his Talent.* I answer, That the Discourse Epictetus disallows, is not such, as is intended for a Trial, but the Effect of Vanity; nor is the Design of it Advancement in Wisdom, but Ostentation and Applause. Well, but *How must he behave himself in such Company then?* Why, the properest and most effectual course to recommend himself, will be, to forbear the venting his Principles in Words, which is but an empty and a very superficial way of propagating them; and to demonstrate the Power and Influence of them in his Actions. This is a substantial Argument, and answers the true End of Philosophy, which is not florid Harangue and nice Dispute, but prudent and unblamable Practice; for this was never intended to teach us to talk well, but to live well. *If therefore you be at a Publick Dinner, do not trouble your self to read grave Lectures to the Company, concerning Temperance in Eating, and its just Bounds and Measures; but take care*

*to observe those Measures, and keep within those Bounds your self.* For by this means you will gain Authority to your Instructions; and, when it comes to your turn to prescribe to others, every Word will make its own way. For, how ridiculous and absurd is it, to set other Men Rules of Temperance, or Patience, and at the same time to be guilty of Gluttony, or sink under the Burden of Afflictions one's self? What force or weight can such a one expect his most studied Discourses should find? And, How unreasonable and inconsistent is it to impose such Laws upon other Mens Conduct, as we are not content to submit to in our own?

But this is not all. He requires a higher degree of Self-denial still. He does not only forbid the beginning of such kind of Discourse; but if any of the Ignorant and Vulgar engage in it of their own accord, he will not allow us to join with them, nor set up for an Oracle, or great Doctor, among Men of meaner Attainments than our selves. For this (he says) is very suspicious, and looks, as if what is so very ready to come up, loaded the Stomach, and was never well digested. For as Meats, when they are duly concocted, distribute themselves into the several Parts, and mix with the vital Juices and Blood to nourish and strengthen the Body; so do Maxims and Doctrines, when well digested, convert into Nourishment, and make the Soul healthful and vigorous. There they lie, like Sap in the Root, which, when occasion serves, spreads itself, and brings forth the Fruits of vertuous Actions first; and when the proper Season comes, and these have attained a just Maturity, then of edifying Discourses in great abundance. But if any one shall force this Fruit of Discourse before its time, when it is not yet ripe and kindly, this in all likelihood will turn to no better account, than the discharging ones Stomach of undigested Meat. And there cannot be a clearer proof  
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that it wants Digestion, than our not being able to keep it any longer. For this is directly that Man's Case, that brings up his Precepts of Philosophy again, while they are raw and whole, and does not shew the effect, and strength of them, in the improvement of his Mind, and growing in those virtuous Habits, which they were intended to produce and confirm.

And, in regard the Soul is naturally given to look abroad into the World, and, for that reason, feels itself very powerfully wrought upon by good Examples, he proposes *Socrates* for an eminent pattern of Modesty: who, though a most accomplished Philosopher, and declared by the Testimony of *Apollo* himself to be the Wisest Man in the World: One, who consequently had good warrant to take more upon him, than any mere Proficient ought to pretend to, was yet the farthest that could be from an assuming Temper, and made it the business of his whole Life, to decline and discountenance Pride and Ostentation. One very remarkable Instance of this kind was his Behaviour to some silly People, who came with a design to put a Slur upon him, and desired, that he would recommend them to some Philosopher, capable of instructing them. He saw thro' their pretence well enough, but, without taking any notice, or shewing the least Resentment of the Affront they intended him; carried them to the Sophisters: Men, who had the Confidence to call themselves Masters and Professors, and made a Trade of Teaching others. Thus when *Hippocrates* the Son of *Apollodorus*, made it his request to be helped to a Master, he recommended him to *Protagoras*. And in that Tract of *Plato*, which is entitled *Theætetus*, he says of himself, that he delivered over several to the Tuition of *Prodicus*, and several to other wise and great Men: So very sparing was this Divine Person in putting himself forward, and so far was he from think-

thinking it a Diminution or Reflection upon himself to be so.

For this, after all, is the mighty Objection, and that against which *Epictetus* fortifies his Scholar. He does not think it a sufficient renouncing of Vain-glory, not to begin a Philosophical Discourse among Men, who do not make Philosophy their business: No, nor to sit still, and not interpose when they have begun it; but there is yet a farther disclaiming of this vicious Quality expected. It is probable, that this Silence may be thought to betray your Ignorance; it is possible some of the Company may be so plain as to tell you so; and, though no Reproach can be more grating, than that of a defect in ones own Profession, yet this Proficient is to run the risque of that, and to hear it without being moved. This if he can do, it is a surer sign that he hath mortified his Vanity, than his uttering the most elaborate Satyr in the World against it; for you have an assurance now that other People condemn you. And if you can see, and hear this without Passion; if you find, that the Resentments which used formerly to boil up in your Breast upon the like occasions, now lie cool and quiet; Take comfort, and triumph, for the subduing of your Anger proves that the Operation is begun, and that you are now reaping those Fruits, which all the wise Exhortations you have heard, were intended to cultivate, and all your own Pains and Study proposed to produce; which is, a Life of Vertue and strict Reason, and the making you not so much a florid and well-spoken, as a prudent and a good Man. For Moral Precepts are learnt, not to be repeated but practised; and the Excellency of them must be proved, not by the Memory, or the Tongue, but by the Conversation of the Hearer: And the bearing this imputation of Ignorance without any disorder is itself such a Proof; for it shews the Mind to be got above both the Fame and the Censures of the World.

World. And this is the Improvement every Master expects to find; for he, that, instead of Practice, gives him his Lectures again, and thinks himself the better for being able to remember and repeat them, is guilty of as great an Absurdity in Nature, as it would be for Sheep to throw up the Grass they had eat, that so the Shepherd may be satisfied of that good Feeding, which ought to shew itself in a large Fleece, firmness of Flesh, and abundance of Milk.

## C H A P. LXX.

*If you have so far mastered your Appetite, as to have brought your Body to coarse Fare, and to be well contented with meer Necessaries, do not glory in your abstemious Diet. And if you drink nothing but Water, proclaim not your own Sobriety upon every occasion: Or if you would inure your self to Hardship, do it for your own Benefit, not to attract the Admiration of other People. Let Vain-glorious Fools embrace Statues in the Streets, to shew the Croud how long they can endure the Cold; but let your Trials of your self be private: And if you would be Hardy in good earnest, when you are almost quite parched with extreme Thirst, take cold Water in your Mouth; then deny your self the satisfaction of Drinking, and spit it out again, and tell no body.*

## C O M M E N T.

**V**Ain-glory hath a thousand several Pretences to ground itself upon; but the most usual, and most plausible, are such as *Epictetus* hath touched upon



upon in this Treatise. Some People court Mens applause, by assuming Narratives of their own Performances; others depend upon their Eloquence for it; a third sort expect to be admired, by dictating to all the Companies they come in, and taking upon them to talk gravely, and teach every one they converse with his Duty; and these he hath exploded and warned already. There is another sort of Vanity very frequent, which is the valuing our selves upon voluntary Austerities; a spare Diet, a frugal way of Living, abstaining from lawful Pleasures, and using the Body to great Hardships; and that makes the Subject of the Chapter now before us.

The Persons therefore, who put these Severities upon themselves, are advised not to look big upon the Matter; that is, not to be too much exalted with an Opinion of their own Merit; or imagine, that they have attained to some peculiar Excellence, and made some mighty Conquest upon Humane Nature, which none but they ever made before. For alas! how extravagant an imagination is this, when we see our selves out-done every day, and many hundreds of indigent Wretches take up with less, and endure more, than the greatest of these Boasters can pretend to? 'Tis true, the one do it out of Necessity, and the other out of Choice; but still Humane Nature is the same in both; and therefore it is plain, these Men, after all their Practice and Pains, have not carried it so far as it is capable of going. Besides, there is always this Consideration ready at hand to mortifie our Pride and Self-conceit of all kinds: that if we excel in this particular, yet there are several others wherein we are deficient; and for one good Quality, which We have and Others want, there might many be reckoned, which Others have and We want. But there is indeed one peculiar Misfortune, that attends a Man's thinking highly of himself upon the account of any Excellence whatsoever;

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which is, That it both hinders him from improving and refining that particular Vertue, as otherwise he might do, supposing that he hath attained to the Perfection of it already; and it checks and cools his Endeavours after other Vertues, as over-rating this single one, and thinking that alone sufficient.

But do not (says he) exercise any of your Vertues for pomp and shew; nor, if you drink Water, beat about the Bush in all Companies to wriggle in a Discourse of your own Abstemiousness and Sobriety: And if you would exercise any bodily Severity, do it for your Benefit, for a trial of your own Patience, to harden your Constitution, and to qualifie you still more and more for Toil, and Trouble, and Self-denial. And if these be as they should be, the true ends you propose from the Practice of them, you will be well satisfied with repeating them in private, and not cover the Eyes and Admiration of the Multitude, nor make it your business to gather a number of Spectators †; like those Wretches, who when they run away from the violence of too mighty an Enemy, implore the assistance of the People, and get upon the Statues to cry help, that they may be more seen, and sooner get a Rabble about them: Their

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† The Account given of this passage by *Casaubon*, in his Notes on this Chapter, seems much more pertinent and satisfactory, than this given here by *Simplicius*. He tells us, that the *Ascetics* formerly, amongst other Trials in which they exercised themselves, used to practise the enduring of Cold: To which purpose in a Frosty Winter's Morning, it was very common to go out into the Streets and Publick Places, and there cling round one of the Brasses or Marble Statues. And because this was very justly suspected to be done more to get the Observation and Applause of a gazing Rabble, than out of any good design upon themselves; therefore *Epictetus* chuses that instance of exposing Vain-glory upon these Accounts. This is a very clear and natural account of the place, and seems grounded upon Authorities sufficient to give it the preference before that of *Simplicius*. See *Casaub.* in *Epictet. Not.* 57.

business being only to draw Company together in their own Defence, and make themselves and their Oppression more conspicuous and deplorable.

But, if you will be mortifying, do it privately and in good earnest; when you are extreme thirsty, take cold Water into your Mouth; and though your Entrails are ready to be burnt up, yet spit it out again; and when you have thus subdued the importunate Clamours of Nature and Necessity, tell no body what you have done. This is Mortification and Severity indeed. But the things of this kind, that are done to be seen and commended of Men, shew plainly that the bent of the Soul lies outwards; that the Man is more concerned for the Fame of the World, than the real and intrinsic Goodness of the Action; and lays a greater stress upon their Praise or Dispraise, than upon the Approbation or the Reproaches of his own Conscience. Besides, he loses all the real Good of his Abstinence and Severity, and profanes a vertuous Action, by an end so base and indirect, as popular Applause.

Now, that the practising such Austerities as these upon ones self, is of excellent use, Experience daily demonstrates. For by this buffeting of the Body, we keep that, and its sensual Inclinations under; and reduce them so low, as not only to prevent any rebellious Insurrections against Reason, but to bring them to a willing and ready compliance, even with those of its Commands, which are of hardest digestion to Flesh and Sense: And there is moreover this mighty Convenience in it, that these voluntary Hardships fit and prepare us for necessary and unavoidable ones. Every Mans Circumstances are fickle and changeable; and sure, when any Affliction, as Want, or the like, happens to us, it is no small advantage for the Body to be so habituated, as to bear those Evils without any great alteration or reluctancy, which it is not possible to run away from. This gains us

an absolute Mastery over the World, and sets us above all the uncertainties of Humane Affairs, when it is no longer in the power of the most spiteful Fortune to hurt us. For whatever extremity of suffering she can possibly drive us to, this is only what we have by long Custom made easie and familiar to our selves before.

## CHAP. LXXI.

*It is the peculiar Quality, and a Character of an undisciplin'd Man, and a Man of the World, to expect no advantage, and to apprehend no mischief, from himself, but all from Objects without him: Whereas the Philosopher, quite contrary, looks only inward, and apprehends, no Good or Evil can happen to him, but from himself alone.*

## CHAP. LXXII.

*The marks that a Proficient in Philosophy may be known by, are such as these. He is not inquisitive or busy in other Men's Matters, so as to censure, or to commend; to accuse, or to complain of any body. He never talks big of himself, nor magnifies his own Vertue or Wisdom. When he falls under any hindrance or disappointment in his Designs, he blames none but himself. If any Person commend him, he smiles within himself, and receives it with a secret Disdain; and if other People find Fault with him, he is not at all solicitous in his own Vindication. His whole Behaviour is like that of a sick Man*

*Man upon recovery, full of caution and fear lest he should relapse again, and injure his advances toward Health, before it be confirmed and perfectly sound. As for Desire, he hath utterly abandoned it, except what depends upon his own self; and Aversions he hath none, but to such Objects only as are vicious and repugnant to Nature and Reason: The Affections and Appetites, which Nature made strong, he hath abated, and taken off all the edge and eagerness of them. If he be disparaged, and pass for an ignorant or insensible Man, he values it not. And, to sum up all in a word, he is exceeding jealous of himself, and observes every Motion of his Mind as rigorously, as a Man would watch a Thief, or an Enemy, that lies lurking to rob or to kill him.*

## C O M M E N T.

**H**E hath now gone through all the instructive part of his Book, and is drawing on towards a Conclusion: And the Substance of what he chooses to close up all with, is this most necessary Caution; That we must not content our selves with reading, or understanding, or remembering Rules of Morality; but take care, that they influence our Lives, and be transcribed in all our Actions. And, that no Man who addicts himself to the Study of Philosophy, must propose so mean an end, as only the informing his Judgment, the filling his Head with curious Notions, or furnishing his Tongue with Matter of learned Discourse, but the reforming of his Vices, and bettering his Conversation; as considering that the Design of Moral Precepts is never answered by

any thing short of Practice. To this purpose, he first describes to us Three sorts of People, whose Characters are so comprehensive, that all Mankind come under under some one or other of them.

For every Person whatsoever is, either a secular Man, one that lives at the common rate, and minds the Affairs of the World, and this is one extreme : Or else he is a Philosopher, who hath abandoned all other Care and Concern, but what relates to Vertue, and the Improvement of his own Mind ; and this is the other opposite Extreme. Or else he must be one of a rank between both these, neither so untaught as the secular and common Man, nor yet so accomplished as the Philosopher ; but such a one as hath renounced the World, and is aspiring to a Mortal Perfection : These are called Proficients, and to them the several Exhortations, that have lately fallen under our Consideration, are particularly directed. But of these we are to take notice, that *Epictetus* makes two sorts, some that are young Beginners, and lately entred into this Discipline ; and others, that have used it longer, and made some competent advances in it.

Now here he presents us with a Description of every one of these, and beginning with that of the Vulgar and undisciplin'd Man, he gives him this distinguishing Mark ; That he expects no part of his Happiness or Misery from himself, but from outward Objects : And the Account of this is as follows.

Reason, which is our very Essence and Form, that which makes and denominates us Men, is placed in our own Power. And so likewise are the Sensual Appetites and Passions, only with this difference, That these are not peculiar to Us alone, but given to us in common with Brutes. So that Reason is the incommunicable Privilege, and proper Prerogative of Humane Nature, That which is given to all Men in common, and to none but Men. For, though there be a difference between one Man's Reason and anothers,  
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when you come to particular Persons, and Operations, and Objects; yet the Faculty in general is the same, the Foundation it proceeds upon the same, and its Ends and Motives are the same. All men are directed by it to pursue the same good Things, to detest and shun the same Evils, to assent to the same Truths and reject the same Errors and Untruths. So that Reason is every Man's Guide; and from this he takes his Measures of Good and Evil, of True and False.

Now the Objects, which Reason inspires us with a Love and Desire of, are certain incorporeal Excellencies, Indivisible and Immutable; such as Justice, and Moderation, and Prudence; and the advantage of these, and the like good Things is, That each Person may enjoy the whole of them, without injuring or depriving his Neighbours. They are of unbounded extent; and no one Man hath the less for any other Man's having more. And from hence it comes to pass, that the Determinations of Right Reason can never be repugnant to one another; and, so long as we pursue the Objects it presents, and recommends to our Affection, there follows no Strife or Contention, but all is Union, and mutual Consent, sweet Harmony, and perfect Peace.

But now, the Sensual Appetites and Passions, such as Anger, and Concupiscence, and the rest that are subordinate to these Two; though in general, and in their own Nature, they be the same in you, and me, and every one, yet the Objects they fasten upon are not the same in each Person. But I fix upon one thing, and you upon another, and so both the Desires themselves, and the Objects of them, and consequently the Aversions, and their Objects too, are extremely distant from one another, and peculiar to each single Man. And, though it should happen, That all should agree in the same Objects, yet would not this put an end to the Difference neither; because the things themselves



that engage theſe Affections, are Corporeal, and Singular, and Diviſible, ſuch, as that one Man's Plenty neceſſarily infers another Man's Want: as Money, for inſtance, or Lands, or Women, or Honour, or Power, or Preferments. No Man can enjoy the whole of theſe, nor indeed a part of them, without depriving, or confining ſome body elſe, in proportion to the Quantity which himſelf enjoys. Upon theſe Accounts it is, that in theſe Caſes Men differ vaſtly in their Judgments; and not only ſo, but the Order and good Government of the World is overturned by them. For whenever the Peace of Mankind is diſturbed, either by private Grudges, Family-Quarrels, Civil Inſurrections, or Forein Wars, ſome of theſe things are conſtantly at the bottom of them. So then the common and untaught Man betrays his Folly, in forſaking the general Rule, and ſlighting the Common Good of his Nature, and ſetting up a particular Standard of his own One, that miſleads his Judgment, and, inſtead of that Good which is univerſal, cramps up his Deſires, and confines him to one that is Perſonal, Individual, and Corporeal, ſuch as does not approve it ſelf to the concurring Judgment of all Mankind, but only ſeems ſo to his own private Opinion, and miſtaken Senſe of things. For this is the true Caſe of External Objects. And whereſoever the Deſire, or the Aversion fixes, whether it be a Vertuous and Reaſonable, or whether a Vicious and Unnatural one, That, to be ſure, is what we apprehend to be our Good, and our Evil; and look for the Happineſs and the Miſery of our Lives from thence. For whatſoever we deſire, excites our Love under the Notion of Good; and whatſoever we deteſt or avoid, provokes our Aversion under the Notion of Evil.

Now the Philoſopher, on the other hand, hath diſcarded all outward things; he will have nothing to do with Matter and Body, but looks upon them as things that very little concern him, and ſuch as he cannot

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have any strict Propriety in. He hath divested his Mind of all those Prejudices that might misguide it, and refined his Reason from the Dross of Sense and Passion; so that these Shadows and gaudy Delusions can impose upon him no longer. Consequently he is concerned for no Good, but what is substantial; nor attends to any other Business, than the Improvement of himself, the Promotion of Wisdom and Goodness, and the aspiring after those Incorporeal Excellencies, that appear so charming and lovely to clear-sighted Reason. Such a one then need never go out of himself to be happy; Vertue is his Good, and that is always at home: And as for Evil, it is utterly banished hence, and can never annoy, or get within him.

After this Description of the Persons, who make up the Two distant Extremes, he proceeds in the next place to give a Representation of the middle sort; *viz.* Those whom he calls his Proficients, and for whose Use all that went before was principally intended. For the very Nature of the Subject shews us plainly, That it could belong to none else. The compleat Philosopher needs no Instruction nor Assistance, but it is properly his Business to assist and instruct others. Nor can this be laid down as a necessary Qualification of a Philosopher, That he neither censures, nor commends any Body; for he is a Master, and a Corrector of Manners, and consequently, as his Authority will bear him out in both, so his Post requires he should do both, as he sees occasion. Nor can these Discourses belong properly to the Common and Undisciplin'd Man; for as the Other is above them, so This man is not capable of them; they would be utterly lost upon him, till he change his Course of Living, and begin to act upon a nobler Principle. This Chapter therefore is a very Compendious Recollection of what went before at large, it is a kind of Remembrancer to us, and presents

us with the Substance of the whole Book in little, and at one view.

I only add, before I quite shut up this Chapter, that That Passage of *watching himself, as he would watch an Enemy*, is very pertinent, and elegantly express'd. For, we are to consider such a Man, in the Mid-way, as it were, between that Vice which he hath disclaimed, and is running away from; and that Vertue which he is moving towards the Perfection of. In this State we cannot but suppose him frequently to reflect upon his former Misery; and like a Patient, who is in a way of Recovery, but far from perfect Health, to be exceeding jealous, and tender, fearful of a Relapse, and cautious of indulging himself in any Liberties, which may keep him back from a sound and confirmed State: And therefore this Jealousie must needs make him a curious Observer of his own Actions, and as severe in his Sentences upon them, as if they were done by an Enemy. And this Rigour is of excellent use, because it frees the Mind of all that partial Fondness, which we are too much inclined to; and which oftentimes makes us either wholly over-look our own and our Friend's Faults; or at least pass very gentle and favourable Constructions upon them. And indeed this is the only way to make us honest and sincere; for a dissolute Man hath no Principles to restrain him; but is \* (according to the Proverb) *A Limber Leather*, that will stretch and bend to any thing, and you never know where to have him.

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\* See Erasim. Adag. in Μαδλις.

## C H A P. LXXIII.

*If you observe any Man value himself for understanding Chrysippus his Book thoroughly, and giving a just Explanation of it; represent to your self the intolerable Absurdity of such a Man's Pride by this single Reflection, that if Chrysippus his Writings had not been obscure, this Expounder would have nothing to brag of. Well, but what is it that I think most worthy my Study? Why my Duty resulting from the Condition of my Nature. I desire to know then, who it is that can teach me this Duty, and I am told Chrysippus can. Upon this Information I apply my self to the reading his Book; I read, but I do not understand him. My next Care then is to look out a good Expofitor. In all this I have done no great Matter. For when by the help of this Exposition I comprehend his Meaning, yet still I want the Practicall Part; and this in truth is the only valuable Progress. For, if I rest in the Author, or the Commentator, and content my self with a bare Understanding, or apt Explication; I have forgot the Matter I took in hand, and am no longer studying the Perfections of a Philosopher, but those of a Grammarian. The Difference is only this, That whereas I have chosen Chrysippus to exercise my Talent upon, he would have pitched rather upon Homer, or some other Classick Author. But this I am sure of,*  
that

*that the more capable I am thought of explaining Chrysippus, the more I ought to be out of Countenance, if what I can teach others so well, I do not take due care to practise as exactly my self.*

### COMMENT.

**A**FTER having distinguished Mankind into three Classes, and represented the Qualities proper to each of them; and also made a short recapitulation of the Directions given before at large to his Proficient; he now begins to enter upon the concluding Part, inculcating in this and the following Chapters, that Rule which alone can give Life and Energy to all the rest; *viz.* That the reducing these Precepts into Practice, must be our chief Study and Care; and that the Good Works which they are excellently accommodated to produce, are the genuine Fruits expected from them, and the very End for which they were composed and communicated. For what an Eminent Orator said once upon a like Occasion, is extremely applicable to the Case now in Hand, That Words without Actions are but mere Air, and empty Sound.

To this purpose, he says, a Man should reflect seriously with himself, what his meaning is, when he reads such Moral Instructions, and puts his Mind upon a sedulous Enquiry after its true and proper Happiness. The Answer to this Question will be, That he intends to examine into humane Nature, and see what is the Constitution, and true Condition of it: And from thence to pursue his Enquiry farther, and consider what Actions, and what Sentiments are agreeable to this Nature; what Impressions are fit for a Creature so framed to admit and indulge; and what are to be stifled and restrained,

restrained, as incongruous and unseemly. Well, upon due Reflection, I find, that I have a Principle of Reason, and a Body, but these not equal in Authority or Value; for my Reason is the Character of my Nature, it challenges a Right over my Body, and commands it as an Instrument subservient to it, and over-ruled by it. The Inference then from hence is plainly this, That God and Nature designed I should live a Life of Reason, and not of Sense; that all my bodily Passions should conform themselves to the Commands of their Lawful Superior; that all my Fears, and all my Desires, should be reduced into due Order, and pay Homage to the more illustrious Perfections of the Soul.

But still I am at a loss how this is to be effected, and am told, That *Chrysippus* hath written an excellent Piece to this purpose. I fall immediately to reading his Book, but find it so abstruse and dark, that I can make nothing at all of it. I am directed to a good Commentary, and by the help of this, I understand him perfectly. But all this while here is very little good done, and but small praise due, either to the intelligent Reader, or the perspicuous Commentator. For when *Chrysippus* wrote this, he did not only intend to be understood and expounded, but had a farther and much better End in it; *viz.* That both his Reader and his Interpreter should practise what he hath written. If then I do this, I attain to the Benefit the Writings were properly intended for, and they have had their due and full effect upon me. But if I delight in the Author, or applaud the Expositor never so much; if I am skill'd in all his Criticisms, see through all his Intricacies, admire the weight of his Sentences, or the turn of his Style; in short, if I master every Difficulty, and have every Attainment, but only that of Practice, I am not one whit improved in my Business. The Title of a more nice and exact Grammarian I may indeed have some pretension

pretension to, but can lay no claim at all to that of a Philosopher: For this Talent of explaining an Author's Meaning, is properly the Qualification of a Grammarian; the only difference is, That *Chrysippus* is an Author something out of his way, and *Homer* a much more likely Man to come under his Consideration.

But there is another difference, which is much more to my Disadvantage; for a Man may read *Homer*, or explain him, and rest there, and yet not be the worse, if he be never the better for it. Whereas with *Chrysippus* it is much otherwise; for the unedifying Reader, in this case, cannot be innocent: And those, who do not mend by his Precepts, contract a deeper guilt, and incur a juster and more severe Condemnation. For, would it not be an intolerable reproach to any sick Man, that should read Prescriptions proper for his own Distemper, and value himself upon pronouncing the Receipts gracefully, and descanting handsomely upon the Virtues of the several Ingredients, and upon being able to direct others how these are to be applied, and yet make use of none of them himself? Does such a Man deserve pity? And yet, as extravagant and absurd a Folly as this is, ours is every whit as bad, or worse, when we have the Diseases of our Souls set plainly before us, and are fully instructed in the Medicines and Restoratives proper for them, and yet are so reckless and stupid, as to do nothing towards our Recovery.



## C H A P. LXXIV.

*Whatever Directions are given you, look upon them as so many Laws, that have a binding Power, and such as you cannot without Impiety depart from: Persevere therefore in the Observance of them all, and be not diverted from your Duty by any idle Reflections the silly World may make upon you; for their Censures are not in your Power, and consequently should not be any part of your Concern.*

## C O M M E N T.

ONE Swallow, we commonly say, makes no Summer; and no more do a few single Acts of Vertue make a Habit, or observing the Directions of *Chrysippus*, in one or two Instances, constitute a good Man. But our Obedience must be firm and constant; we must consider our Duty, as that which is our Happiness and truest Advantage, and suffer no Consideration, how tempting soever, to draw us off from it. We must look upon our selves as under indispensable Obligations, such as cannot be broke loose from, without the highest Impiety. And reason good there is to do so; for if we esteem it dishonourable and impious to fail of our promise, or fly off from an Agreement in every trifling matter, because, though the thing is of no value, yet the Violation of our Word is of horrible consequence (as tending to the taking away that mutual Faith and good Assurance, by which all Society and Commerce is maintained among Men;) How much more solemn and sacred ought those Engagements to be esteemed,

by

by which we have tied our selves up to Wisdom and Vertue, and Innocency of Life? Now these are violated, when a Man assents to the Truth of what he is taught, and the Reasonableness of what he is commanded, and expresses this Assent by living accordingly for a time, but afterwards relapses and turns Deserter.

Upon this account he advises us by all means to persevere in Goodness, and particularly not to be discomposed with any Reflections, the idle World shall cast upon us: For, as he intimated before (*Chap. XXIX.*) it is highly probable, they will take upon them to censure our Conduct pretty freely; they will tax us with Singularity and Preciseness, and call our Change, Pride, or Affectation. Now such Discouragements as these, we must be provided against, and not let them cool our Zeal, or shake our Vertue; and that, because other Men's Tongues are not at our disposal, and therefore what they say should give us no disturbance.

This Passage may probably enough allude to that allegorical Saying of *Pythagoras* and his Followers: *That when a Man comes into the Temple, he should never look behind him.* By which they designed to insinuate, That Religious Purposes should be fixed and steady; and that, when we come to God, we should come with settled Resolutions, not with doubtful and wavering Minds, such as would soon divide themselves between God and the World. —

## C H A P. LXXV.

*Up then, and be doing ; How long will you defer your own Happiness, and neglect the due observance of those Directions that shew you the way to it, and the Dictates of Reason, which, if duly followed, would always chuse the best ! You have the Rules and Precepts to this purpose laid plainly before your Eyes ; you have perused and assented to the Truth and Equity of them : What Master do you stay for now ? Whom can you with any colour lay these Delays of Reformation upon ? You are past the Giddiness of Youth, and have all the Advantages of sound Reason, and a ripe Judgment. If you neglect this Opportunity, and grow slothful now, and make one Resolution after another, and fix first one Day, and then another, for the turning over a new Leaf with your self, and still do nothing ; you will cheat your self, and go backwards, and at last drop out of the World, not one jot a better Man than you came into it. Lose no time then, but set about a good Life just now ; and let the Determinations of Right Reason be an inviolable Law to you from this very Moment. If you meet with a discouraging Difficulty, or an enticing Pleasure ; if you are invited by a prospect of Honour, or affrighted with the Fear of Disgrace, encounter the Temptation bravely, whatever it be. Remember this is the Combat you are called to ; this is the*  
E c Field,

*Field, in which you are to signalize your self, and there is no declining the Trial. All your Fortunes depend upon one Engagement; and the Ground you have gotten heretofore, must either be maintained by one gallant Victory, or lost by one base Retreat. It was thus that Socrates grew so great, by putting himself forward upon all occasions, pushing every Advantage as far as it would go, and never hearkning to any other Persuasions, but those of his own Reason. And if you are not so great a Man as Socrates, yet it will become you to live and act, as if you intended in time to be as great as he.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**HIS also is an Admonition no less requisite than the former; and highly necessary it is, that a Man who hath embraced this philosophical Discipline, and resolved to submit to it, should be put in mind how precious Time is, and awakened into Diligence.

*Delays* (as we commonly say of them) are dangerous; and one certain ill effect of them is, that they are but so many Pretences for indulging our Sloth. To what purpose therefore (says he) do you deferr your own Happiness, and the practice of these Rules you have received? For it is this Practice only, that can render you virtuous and happy, and answer the Design both of the composing and the learning them. The Operation expected from them, is, To conform all your Actions to Right Reason; to fix this as a perpetual and inviolable Law; to retrench your Desires, allay all your Passions, and bring every Inclination, and every Aversion, to fix upon

upon proper Objects, and confine themselves within their just bounds.

Another possibly might alledge want of Instruction in his own excuse, and declare himself most ready to be good, were he but sufficiently taught how to be so. But this cannot do you any service, who have had all the advantages imaginable of Knowledge and Improvement: You, I say, who have not only had the Maxims of Philosophy, and the Measures of Vertue fully explained and illustrated, but have applied your Mind to the study of these things, and made some considerable progress in them; especially, who have had it evidently proved to you, That you are by no means to content your self with having your Understanding enlightned, and your Judgment convinced by these Rules, unless you digest and make them of a piece with your Soul, that they may be like a Principle of new Life within you, exerting it self in virtuous Habits, and influencing your whole Conversation. Since therefore all this, and indeed all that can be necessary for your due Information, hath been so fully opened, and so pathetically urged upon you, make not Ignorance and want of means a pretence, as if you still were to wait for some more powerful Call.

Others may possibly plead their Age, and the Heats and unthinking Follies of Youth, which render them incapable of sober Reflection and severe Discipline. But you are in the very Season of Life, that is most kindly for Vertue; the Vehemencies of Youth are worn off, and the Weaknesses of old Age have not yet disabled you: Your Passions are sedate, your Judgment solid, and your Strength in its perfection: And if this inviting Opportunity be suffered to slip through your hands; if you cannot now find in your heart to take some pains to be good, when you are best qualified to master what

you attempt ; if Sloth and Supineness get the power over you, to make Appointments and break them ; to fix upon particular Days for setting about this Great Work ; and, when they are come, to drive it off to a farther Day again, you do but play booty with your Conscience, and deal like dishonest Debtors, who stop their Creditor's mouths with fair Promises, and fix a distant time for those Payments, which they never intend to make. Thus, while your Soul is deluded with a vain Hope and Expectation of doing something, you stifle the Reproaches from within, by fresh Resolves ; but still those new are as insignificant as the old, and pitch upon a To-morrow which will never come. And it were well indeed, if this were the worst of it ; but, alas ! in Virtue there can be no such thing as standing still : While you deferr growing better, you necessarily grow worse, and by insensible Decay relapse into Ignorance and Vice again. Thus, after a number of Years spent in fruitless Intentions, you live and die a Fool, and so must continue for ever : For, as our state of Separation, before we came into these Bodies, had a great influence upon what we do here, and the Disposition of the Souls we brought into the World, is a marvellous advantage to our future Vertue ; so our Behaviour here is but the Preface and Preparation to what we shall do there again. For the whole of this taken together, is one entire Life, and the time we pass here but one stage of it ; only the \* state of Præ existence makes some alteration in our Life here ; and our Life here makes a considerable one, and indeed determines us, as to the state of our Separation hereafter.

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\* This proceeds upon the Platonick and Pythagorean Hypothesis, and agrees to the Notions more largely taken notice of, Chap. I.

*Now therefore, now aspire* (says he) *to perfection, and live as one that does so.* Absolute Perfection he does not mean; for then his Exhortation would be needless, but the Perfection of a Proficient, such a degree, as a state of Discipline and Probation is capable of; that is, so as never to lose ground, but to be continually advancing forwards. And to this purpose, whatever, upon mature Consideration, appears most reasonable, let it have the force of a Law with you; a Law, I say, which cannot be satisfied with being known and understood, but requires a positive and actual Obedience.

To strengthen you in this Resolution, you may have one mighty Encouragement; which is, That all the Accidents of humane Life are so far in subjection to you, that you may with a prudent Care make them all, though never so different in themselves, conspire together to your own advantage: For, whether you meet with any thing successful or disastrous, pleasant or painful; whether it tend to Honour or Ignominy, all are manageable; only be sure, let the Temptation be never so small, never slight or neglect it; and though it be never so great, do not be dispirited at it. Security will give a defeat, where there was no Strength to do it; and Despondency will lose the Prize, where there is Force enough to win it.

Be sure then, that you let no Accident pass unimproved, but imagine, that every one is an Adversary that challenges you to the Field, and that Virtue is the Crown you are to contend for; remember, that there is no middle state, no getting off without Blows, but Conquest or Ruine must be the Fate of the Day. Nor are you to slip one Day, or overlook one single Action upon a vain imagination, That such little things cannot turn to your prejudice: For that one Day, that single Action, determines your whole Fortune, and your Preservation, or your Destruction, depends upon this nice point. Thus *Epicætus* assures



you, and he tells you very true. And if it seem incredible and surprizing, pray be pleased to consider, that every Indulgence of a Vice gives it new force to assault us, and abates of our power to resist it. He that is slothful and irresolute to day, will be great deal more so to morrow; and if there be (as there will be sure to be) any fresh Objection to palliate his Idleness, he will have a great deal less mind to encounter it the third day, than he had the second. And thus by degrees the Dispositions to Goodness will waste away, and all the Vigour of his Mind languish and die. It will yield more and more tamely to every fresh attack, till at last Reason be quite enfeebled and overpowered, and all the advances the Man had formerly made in Goodness, be lost to all other Intents and Purposes, except that only of adding to his Shame and his Guilt.

Now the very same single Trials, which, when neglected, do thus lose ground, do, when attended to and improved, maintain and get it. And Vertue increases by the same methods, and much in the same proportions, that it declines. For the practice of one Day, and the performance of one Act, leaves an Impression behind it, and confirms the Mind so, that the next Attempt proves a great deal more easie. The Reluctancies of Sense wear off, and repeated Acts become habitual and familiar, and we daily feel our own Advantages. Frequent use gives us a more masterly hand, and what we can do well, and with ease, we naturally come to do with delight. Thus Men never continue long the same, but every Hour, every moral Action, every single Accident of their Lives makes some alteration in them.

*Socrates* had a just sense of this, and express'd it abundantly in the circumspection of his Life. For the very thing that raised him so high, and gave him the Character of the Wisest of Men, was his constant Care never to neglect any advantage, nor delay the doing any

any good. He made every Accident of every kind turn to some good account, and was deaf to all other Solicitations, though never so importunate, except those of his own Reason, and the Results of his most careful and composed Thoughts. You will say, perhaps, This signifies very little to you, who have not the Vanity to think your self like *Socrates*. But give me leave to say, If you are not like him, you would do well to endeavour it; and, whatever you want of his Perfections at present, live with that exactness, as if you meant and hoped one day to equal them: For the prospect of an eminent Example is a wonderful advantage; it fires a Man with noble Emulation, and, whilst he keeps the Pattern in his eye, he is provoked to imitate his Excellencies, and feels himself at once directed how to copy after them, and ashamed not to do so.

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## C H A P. LXXVI.

*The first and most useful Topick in Philosophy, is the Moral part, which teaches Men their Duty; as for instance, That they should not lie: The second is the demonstrative part, which gives us infallible proofs of it, and shews us evident Reasons wherefore we ought not to lie: The Third is the distinguishing and argumentative part, which instructs us what a Demonstration is, and how this in the case before us is one; What is a Consequence; What a Contradiction; What is True, and what is False. Now from hence it is plain, that the last of these is subservient to the second; that the second is subordinate to the first, and that the first is the most important and necessary point of all: That which all our Studies should*

*be directed to, and wherein they should all center and rest at last. But we quite invert this Order. The third employs most of our Time and Pains, and the first is not thought worth either: So that, by a strange Absurdity, we commit the Crime, and at the same time value our selves exceedingly, for being able to demonstrate beyond all contradiction, that we ought not to commit it.*

### C O M M E N T.

**I**T is absolutely necessary, that a Man, who makes any pretensions to Philosophy, and aims at the peculiar perfection of his Nature, both as he is an Animal, and a Rational Creature, should have a clear and demonstrative knowledge of the Truth: For otherwise, he may be liable to great Errors, and run into infinite Inconveniences, by taking things upon trust, and leaning too much, either to the bare Authority, or the insufficient proofs of confident Pretenders. Virtue is a thing of highest Consequence, and it is not fit we should take up with so slight and feeble Perswasions concerning it, as mere Opinion and Probabilities are capable of creating in us. Now this clear and undoubted Evidence is an effect owing only to Demonstration. And it is Logick's peculiar Province, to inform us in the Nature of a Demonstration, as, That it is a Syllogism consisting of Propositions, put together according to Rules of Art; and that those Propositions must be of clear and undoubted Truth: As also to acquaint us, what Propositions are qualified, and what Method is to be observed for the forming them into a true Syllogism.

Now from hence we plainly perceive, that the whole compass of Philosophy may be reduced to three Heads, and that these will comprehend, if not all absolutely

olutely, yet all that is material and necessary in it. The First is the Preceptive part, that which converts our Speculation into Practice, which prescribes Modesty and Temperance in our Actions, and prohibits Lying in all our Discourse and Conversation. The second is the demonstrative part, which shews us clearly, not only that we should or should not, but also assigns convincing Reasons, why we should or should not, do this or that. The third is the Illustrating and Arguing part, which sets Rules to our Reasoning, and assists Nature by Art. This prevents our being imposed upon by false appearances, by teaching us the difference, between a real demonstration, and a pretended one; and shews the mutual Connexions and Consequences of some Propositions, and the irreconcilable Opposition between others; as, That the Species necessarily inferrs its *Genus*, and the Being of a Man implies that of an Animal; That a particular Affirmative and an universal Negative, and so likewise a particular Negative and an universal Affirmative, are direct Contradictions, never to be reconciled and impossible to be both true or both false together. It acquaints us too with the qualifications of a Syllogism, What Propositions it consists of; How these Propositions must be put together; What difference there will be in the Conclusion, according to the manner of forming it; and what differences there are between true and fair Syllogisms, and irregular, sophistical, and ensnaring ones.

Now nothing can be more plain, than that this Third Topick, which instructs us in all the Subtleties of Reasoning, is intended to serve the Second; and that This is an Ingenious and Artificial Expedient, contrived, as we see, to remove all the Scruples and Dissatisfactions of our Minds, to direct and fix our Judgments, and give us the most uncontestable and satisfactory Assurance, what is our real Happiness and what our Duty. This, I say, is the Business of the  
Second

Second Head, which consists in Demonstrative Proofs; but then it is every whit as plain too, that this Second is subordinate to something beyond it; *viz.* The Practical and Preceptive Part; and consequently both the other are resolved into the First. For our Knowledge is intended only to qualify us for Action, and lead us to it; and therefore the Practice of Vertue and a Good Life is the ultimate Design of all Study, and all Instruction: Here we must fix at last; for every thing else conspires to promote this; but beyond this there is no End of greater Consequence, or higher Perfection.

And happy were it for us, if we governed our selves by this Rule. But, alas! we take quite contrary Measures; the greatest part of our Time and Pains is employed in the Third Head; in nice Disputes and Controverted Points; and we can spare but very little for the Second; That which should convince us of the Excellence, and the Necessity of being Vertuous, and possess our Souls with a lively and vigorous Sense of our Duty: But for the First of these Topicks, which consists in reducing our Knowledge into Practice, we allow this no Portion of our Care at all. We wrangle and dispute eternally, about curious and unprofitable Questions; and overlook that which would conduce to the promoting true Goodness. We study this now and then, and talk learnedly, and affectionately upon it; but still we do no part of what we say. Nay, which is the most monstrous inconsistency that can be, we are guilty of gross Enormities in our own Persons, and at the same time are proud, that we are able to convince and persuade others, That we can shew, we ought not to be what we are: And it pleases us much to think, that no body can expose the Deformity of our own Actions, better than our selves.

Now all this is turning things up-side down, and beginning at the wrong End. The Method in which  
we

we ought to proceed is this: First to learn how to argue against Vice, then to employ our Talent in demonstrating the Baseness and Incongruity of it to our selves; and, when we are arrived to a full and undoubted Conviction, then actually to decline it, and to persevere in the Practice of what we have learnt, as considering, that we learnt it for that very purpose; and that the Preceptive Part, though Superior to all the rest, is yet itself subordinate to the Practical.

This is the Substance and Design of *Epictetus* in the Chapter now before us, where he does with great Dexterity inforce the Practice of his Moral Maxims, and exposes the Vanity of those Men, who make Speculation the end of their Knowledge, with that Indignation which so exquisite a Folly deserves.

## CHAP. LXXVII.

*In every Undertaking we shall do well to resign our selves to the Disposal of Providence, in some such Ejaculation as this:*

Conduct me, *Jove*, and thou, O powerful Fate,  
In every Enterprize, in every State,  
As you determine: For I must obey  
The wise Injunctions, which you on me lay.  
For should I at your dread Decrees repine,  
And strive your Sacred Order to decline:  
I should but labour wickedly in vain,  
And struggle with an everlasting Chain,  
And after all, be dragg'd along with pain.

*E. Walker's Epictet. Eng. Paraphrase.*

## CHAP.

## C H A P. LXXVIII.

He that submits to Destiny's Decrees,  
Is justly counted Wise by Men, and knows  
The due Respects which to the Gods he owes.

## C O M M E N T.

**I**N regard some of the Ancients have collected together those Moral Axioms, which were occasionally delivered, and lie scattered up and down in larger Books; he advises us to have some of these significant Sentences always ready at hand; as being not only short, and so no Burden to the Memory, but also likely to make a deeper and more lasting Impression, both upon the Account of their own Weight, and the celebrated Name of their Authors. For this Reason he subjoins some such here; the first whereof was a Meditation of *Cleanthes*, Scholar to *Zeno*, and Master to *Chrysippus*: The Eminence of this Man was so great, that I my self have seen at *Affos*, (of which place he was a Native) a very noble Statue, worthy his Fame, and the Magnificence of the Senate of *Rome*, who set it up in Honour of him.

In these Verses he begs the Guidance of God, and that Providence and Power, whereof God is the Source, and which makes and moves all things. This he calls here by the name of Fate; and promises for his part, that he will obey its Motions, and follow it whithersoever it leads him. And it is but reasonable, that he, and every Man, should dispose his Mind to a willing and ready compliance, because Opposition (as he observes) will not only be Wick-  
ed



ed but Fruitless too, and follow it we must whether we will or no. Only it is in our Choice, whether this shall be with Cheerfulness and Contentation; or with Reluctancy and Sorrow. Shake our Chain, and gaul our selves with it we may, but break it we cannot; for the Cause will always be stronger than its Effect, and there it no getting loose from him, *in whom we live, and move, and have our Being.*

To this purpose *Epictetus* advised us before ( Chap. XIII.) *Trouble not your self* ( says he ) *with wishing, That things may be just as you would have them, but be well pleased they should be just as they are; and then you will live easie.* And indeed this of Submission is a most comprehensive Duty; it takes in the whole Substance of Morality and Vertue: And a Man may very deservedly be called Good, when he is satisfied with his Lot in common with the rest of the World, and can look upon himself as a part of this vast Universe, without any such greedy and assuming Notions, as would restrain Providence within a narrow Compass, and make a World of himself alone, and oppose that Harmony of Events, which consults the Good of the Whole. As if the Course of the World were to be changed, and its Order disturbed, to follow so inconsiderable a Part, rather than he should move along with this great Engine, and take up with what falls to his own Share.

The Second Sentence is taken out of one of *Euripides* his Tragedies, and hath a great Affinity to the former. For Necessity signifies that over-ruling Power, which submits all things to God, and makes all contribute to the First Cause, ( that is, the obeying the Divine Pleasure, and promoting his Glory ) whether they will or no. The Man therefore that strikes in, and acts in consent with, this, that follows it with Alacrity, and betrays no lothness, or regret, gives a good Proof of his Wisdom: His Behaviour shews, that he understands the Nature of the World; and

and, that Partiality to a private Interest, hath not so far biassed him, but he can still make a just Distinction between a Whole and a Part. And, as this answers his Wisdom, so does it his Piety too; for nothing expresses our Reverence for God better, than such a cheerful Resignation of our selves, and receiving contentedly whatever he sends upon us.

## C H A P. LXXIX.

*Or this other. O, Crito, If this be God's pleasure concerning me, His Will be done; Anytus and Melitus may take away my Life, but it is not in their power to do me any hurt.*

## C O M M E N T.

**T**His is quoted out of a Discourse of *Plato's* entitl'd *Crito*, and is spoken there in the Person of *Socrates*: The Sense is much the same with the former, only wrapp'd up a little close, and delivered in fewer Words. And indeed the Man, who can make this Profession, and whose Life speaks it as well as his Tongue; hath vanquished all his Pride and Discontent, and cured the Degeneracy of his Nature. He hath abandoned Corruption, gives up himself to God without any reserve, and submits to all his Dispensations with a perfect acquiescence of Mind. And to me *Epicetus* seems to have produced these Sayings at the close of his Book, that, by the Testimony and Example of such eminent Persons, he might confirm us in this Belief, that the utmost Perfection, attainable by a Humane Soul, is a sincere Conversion or turning to God; and that a ready compliance with his Will upon all occasions is the Crown and Complement of all Vertues.

That

That last Clause, *Anytus and Melitus may kill me, but they cannot hurt me*, is taken out of *Plato's* Defence of *Socrates*, and spoken to his Accusers: And thus our Author brings both ends together, by refreshing our Memory here with what he insisted upon so largely at the beginning; *viz.* That the Man, who places his Good and Evil only in the use of his Native Liberty, and those things that come within the compass of his own choice, and does not depend upon external Objects for his Happiness: This Man, I say, is above the World, he cannot be brought under the Dominion of any thing, nor is it in the Power of Men, or Accidents, to do him the least prejudice.

Thus have I finished those Meditations, which occur'd to me upon this Subject; and because I thought they might be of some Service to those that shall read *Epictetus*, I was willing to contribute what little Assistance I could to the true Understanding of so excellent an Author. Nor does my writing this Commentary prove beneficial to others only, for I my self have already found great Advantage from it, by the agreeable Diversion it hath given me, in a Season of Trouble and Publick Calamity. All I have more to add, is only a Prayer proper to this Subject, and with it I conclude.

"Grant, I beseech thee, O Lord, the Giver and  
 "Guide of all Reason, that we may always be mind-  
 "ful of the Dignity, of the Nature, and of the Pri-  
 "vileges thou hast honoured us withal; that we may  
 "act in all things as becomes free Agents, to the  
 "subduing and governing our Passions, to the refin-  
 "ing them from Flesh and Sense, and to the ren-  
 "dering them subservient to excellent Purposes.  
 "Grant us also thy Favourable Assistance in the re-  
 "forming and directing our Judgment; and enlight-  
 "en us with thy Truth, that we may discern those  
 "things

"things that are really Good; and, having discovered them, may love and cleave stedfastly to the same. And, finally, Disperse, we pray thee, those Mists which darken the Eyes of our Mind; that so we may have a perfect Understanding: And (as Homer expresses it) know ( ἢ μή τι θάδῃ, ἢ τίς ἔσθῃ ) both God and Man, and what to each is due.

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